

Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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1. Introduction

Farmland Preservation Plan Overview

A productive, secure agricultural land base in Sauk County is vital to our ability to maintain agriculture as a dominant part of our culture and preserve agriculture as a viable industry which helps society to secure necessary food, fiber, and fuel supplies. Agriculture, a significant economic driver in Sauk County, has over 1,900 working farms with over 358,900 acres either under production or reserved for future production.¹ The future success of agriculture requires maintaining land areas for future production while assuring favorable and expanded markets for agricultural commodities. A well-crafted and implemented farmland preservation plan cannot necessarily preserve all of our agricultural lands, nor can it provide stable and growing markets for agricultural commodities, but it can provide policy guidance when choosing what initiatives to implement as a county, when and where to implement them, and in what capacity.

Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative

In 2009 the Wisconsin Legislature enacted Wisconsin Act 28 (2009-2011 Budget Bill) to create what is commonly referred to as the Working Lands Initiative. This law changes Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes and sets forth technical specifications for programs that further the physical preservation of farmland, provides a means of economic support and opportunities to the state's agricultural producers, and connects production to markets. The new law continues Sauk County's tradition of maintaining the farmland preservation plan and zoning certification, conservation compliance, and leading policy implementation efforts that result in measurable outcomes which support a vibrant agricultural economy.

Under the new law, Sauk County must update the Farmland Preservation Plan by December 31, 2013. The law also specifies that Sauk County must maintain a certified zoning ordinance in order for landowners to qualify for farmland preservation income tax credits, Agricultural Enterprise Areas, or

¹ Sauk County Agriculture, Value & Economic Impact. University of Wisconsin Extension, Cooperative Extension, 2011

Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement.² The updated plan is an integral continuation of Sauk County’s previous planning efforts to support the agricultural industry, which first began with the adoption of the first farmland preservation plan in 1979.

History of Farmland Preservation Planning in Sauk County

Sauk County has a history of preserving farmland through the implementation of state programs, influencing the development of new state programs, as well the establishment of programs uniquely tailored to Sauk County. The following is a historical timeline of agriculture-related plans and programs which were proposed or adopted in Sauk County.

1979: Sauk County adopted the “*Sauk County Agricultural Preservation Plan.*” This plan promoted the preservation of agricultural lands through the use of techniques such as density based zoning, the transfer of development rights, and identifying lands within each town to be preserved for agricultural land uses, transitioned from an agricultural land use to a developed state, or lands that were currently developed.

1981: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors considered the adoption of the Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District (EAZ) as part of the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance.

1986: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors approved the addition of the Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District (EAZ) to the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance.

1986-1990: Following the adoption of the EAZ by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, the following towns adopted EAZ.

- Town of Troy, October 1986
- Town of Prairie du Sac, October 1986
- Town of Ironton, November 1986
- Town of Sumpter, April 1987
- Town of Westfield, June 1987
- Town of Franklin, July 1987
- Town of Honey Creek, July 1987
- Town of Reedsburg, November 1990

1999: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors approved the *Sauk County 20/20 Development Plan.*

2004: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors considered the adoption of an agricultural land purchase of development rights program.

2006: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors approved an addendum to the 1979 Farmland Preservation Plan to implement a density based zoning program for towns zoned Exclusive Agriculture and Resource Conservancy.

² WI State Statute Chapter 91, Farmland Preservation

2006: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the addition of the Planned Unit Development Program (subsequently renamed Planned Rural Development Program) to the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance, which implemented the density-based zoning program.

2009: The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative was passed as a part of the state's 2009-2011 biennial budget and coincided with an update to Chapter 91 of Wisconsin State Statutes.

2009: The Sauk County Board of Supervisors approved the Sauk County Comprehensive Plan entitled, 'Positioning Sauk County For The Future'.

2011: The Sauk County Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning Departments combined to form the Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department.

2013: **DATCP certification of FPP plan**

2013: **County board approval of FPP Plan**

Overview of the 1979 Farmland Preservation Plan and the 1979 and 2006 Addendums

The first Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan was adopted in 1979 and provided policy guidance related to:

- Developing and adopting an Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District;
- Implementing conservation practices;
- Establishing farmland preservation plan maps for each town.

The 1979 addendum provided additional policy guidance to:

- Recommend the development of a Purchase of Development Rights program, with an emphasis on purchasing agricultural conservation easements.

The 2006 addendum provided additional policy guidance to:

- Detail the planned unit development, cluster development and density based zoning program including residential siting and land preservation standards;
- Update Farmland Preservation Plan maps for consistency with future land uses identified in those towns with adopted comprehensive plans.

The Sauk County Planning and Zoning Department led the development of the original plan and addendums along with securing certification from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade,

and Consumer Protection (DATCP). As a result of this overall and ongoing farmland preservation planning effort, the Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan, addendums, and implementation ordinances have received certification from DATCP, and continue to be the primary tools to preserve agricultural land in towns that have adopted Exclusive Agriculture Zoning.

The Planning Process

The Sauk County Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) Committee provided oversight to the planning process and to the development of implementation strategies adopted as part of this Farmland Preservation Plan. A discussion group consisting of persons representing various aspects of the Sauk County agriculture community met to contribute to goal and strategy formation. The Sauk County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department staff gathered data, held information and listening sessions, provided assistance during the discussion group meetings, and worked with the towns to update the Farmland Preservation Plan Map.

Community Participation

Community participation during the planning process occurred in a number of different ways. The following is a summary of efforts to solicit public input:

- A discussion group from the agriculture community throughout Sauk County provided input and policy suggestions;
- The CPZ Committee received regular updates at their meetings;
- The CPZ Committee provided guidance throughout the process;
- Two public information meetings and listening sessions were held in January, 2013;
- Interested persons and attendees of the information meetings and listening session were provided information during the planning process via email;
- Updates, information, discussion group meeting times and a contact email address were posted to the Sauk County website;
- The towns provided input during the public information meetings and listening sessions as well as during the process of updating of their Farmland Preservation Plan map;
- The Conservation Planning and Zoning committee held a public hearing on October 22, 2013.

Plan Implementation, Maintenance and Review

The Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department will review and monitor this plan with the CPZ Committee periodically to seek policy directives regarding implementation efforts and potential plan amendments. Without periodic review, this plan has the potential to lose its relevance as conditions change, specific projects are implemented, or as new priorities emerge.



2. Conditions and Trends

This chapter provides an overview of Sauk County and the general context and trends with which this Farmland Preservation Plan is based. While much information was obtained from the county and local plans, additional background information and assessments are presented in:

- *Positioning Sauk County for the Future, A Comprehensive Plan for Organizations, Businesses, and Governments in Sauk County*, adopted in 2009;³
- *The Land and Water Resource Management Plan*, adopted in 2007;⁴
- *The Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan*, adopted in 2003;
- Various local comprehensive plans adopted between 2003 and 2008 including:⁵
 - The Cities of Baraboo, Reedsburg, and Wisconsin Dells;
 - The Villages of Ironton, LaValle, Lime Ridge, Loganville, Merrimac, Plain, Sauk City/Prairie du Sac (completed jointly along with the Town of Prairie du Sac), and Spring Green;
 - The Towns of Baraboo, Bear Creek, Dellona, Delton, Excelsior, Fairfield, Franklin, Freedom, Greenfield, Honey Creek, Ironton, LaValle, Merrimac, Prairie du Sac (completed jointly along with the Villages of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City), Reedsburg, Spring Green, Troy, Westfield, Winfield, Woodland;
 - The master plan for the unincorporated Villages of Leland and Denzer.

Environmental Resources

To sustain agriculture production of food, fiber and fuel for the world population of over seven billion people, the agriculture community requires access to affordable resources and markets, available land, healthy soil and water.

³ <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/planningandzoningpage/sauk-county-comprehensive-plan>

⁴ <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/LWRM%20Plan.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/planningandzoningpage/local-comprehensive-planning-sauk-county-town-village-city-plans>

Geology and Soils

There are three major geological regions of Sauk County which influence the major soil types found. These are often categorized as The Driftless Area, the Glaciated Area and the Baraboo Hills.

The Driftless Area comprises the western four-fifths of Sauk County. There is no evidence of this area having been glaciated for at least 750,000 years. Because the western portions of Sauk County are unglaciated, the topography has been sculpted by flowing water for thousands of years, resulting in relatively narrow ridges and steep-sided valleys carved into Cambrian dolomite and sandstone formations. The uplands are typically underlain by dolomite. Soils in the Driftless Area are characterized as moderately well drained to excessively well drained soils that have a sandy loam to silt loam, loamy to sandy surface and a sandy loam to silt loam, loamy, sandy, or clayey subsoil, underlain by sandstone and dolostone bedrock.⁶

The Glaciated Area in the eastern one-fifth of Sauk County includes rolling terrain with intricate slopes composed of glacial till (clay, silt, sand, boulders, and other debris transported and deposited by glacial ice), and sediment deposited in glacial lakes and on the floodplains of glacial melt water rivers. The majority of the soils found in the glaciated eastern portion of Sauk County are characterized as being moderately well drained to excessively drained; having a loamy or sandy surface and subsurface layer, underlain by outwash and glacial till.⁷

The Baraboo Hills (also known as the Baraboo Range or the Baraboo Bluffs) are centered across the middle section of the county, forming one of the more significant topographic features. The bluffs are composed of Precambrian red quartzite, which is one of the hardest known rock types. Soils on the Baraboo Bluffs are characterized as well drained, medium textured soils over shallow quartzite rock outcroppings. Portions of the Baraboo Bluffs occur in both the Driftless Area and the Glaciated Area.⁸

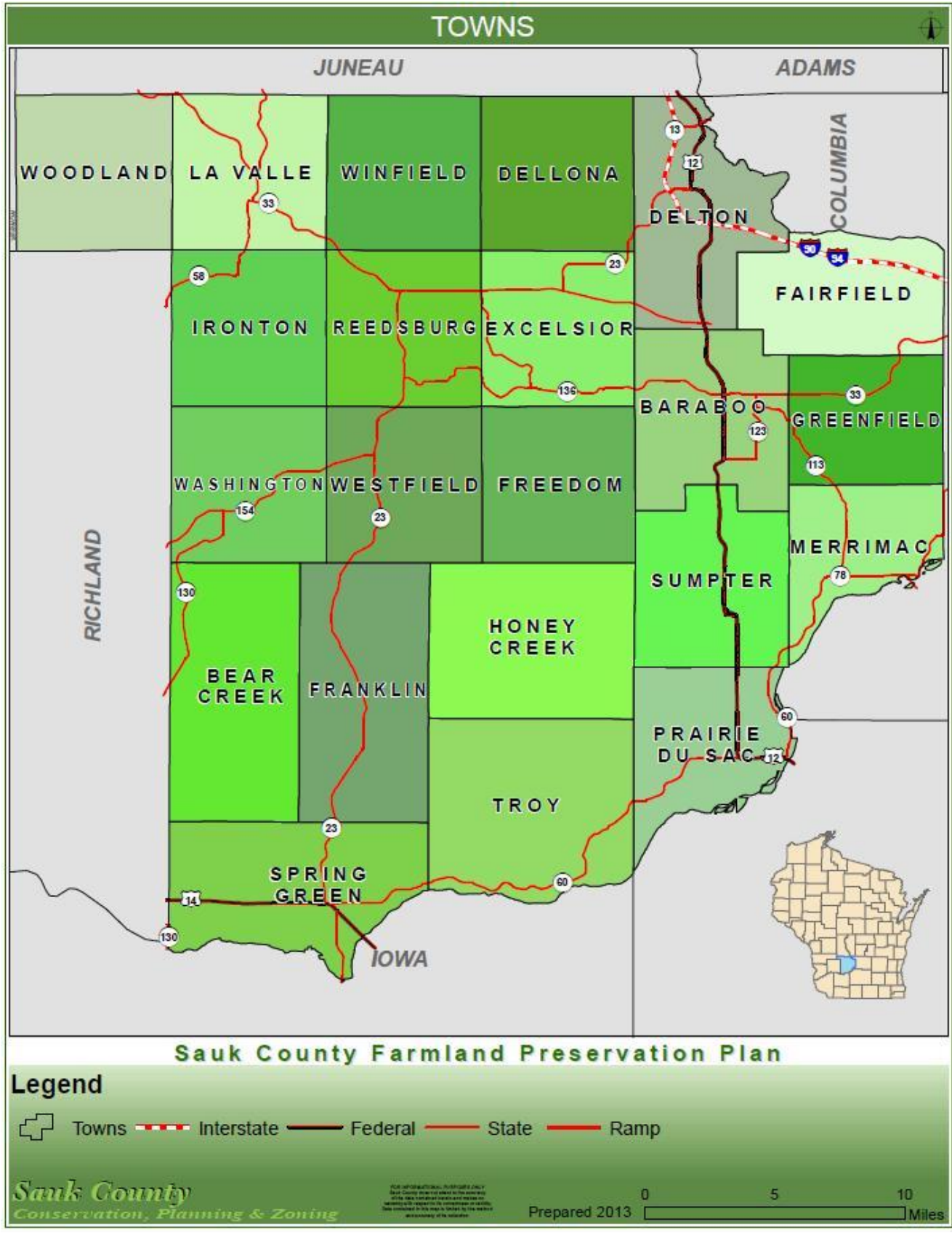
Soil Erosion

Soil erosion varies depending on soil type, slope, time of year, the amount and intensity of rainfall events as well as activities occurring on the soil at a given time. Many of the soils in Sauk County are susceptible to erosion. Whenever soil erosion processes equal those of soil building, we refer to the maintenance of this balance as tolerable soil loss, or “T.” When soil building processes exceed soil erosion levels, the field has a soil loss less than “T”. When soil erosion exceeds soil building, the field has a soil loss greater than “T”.

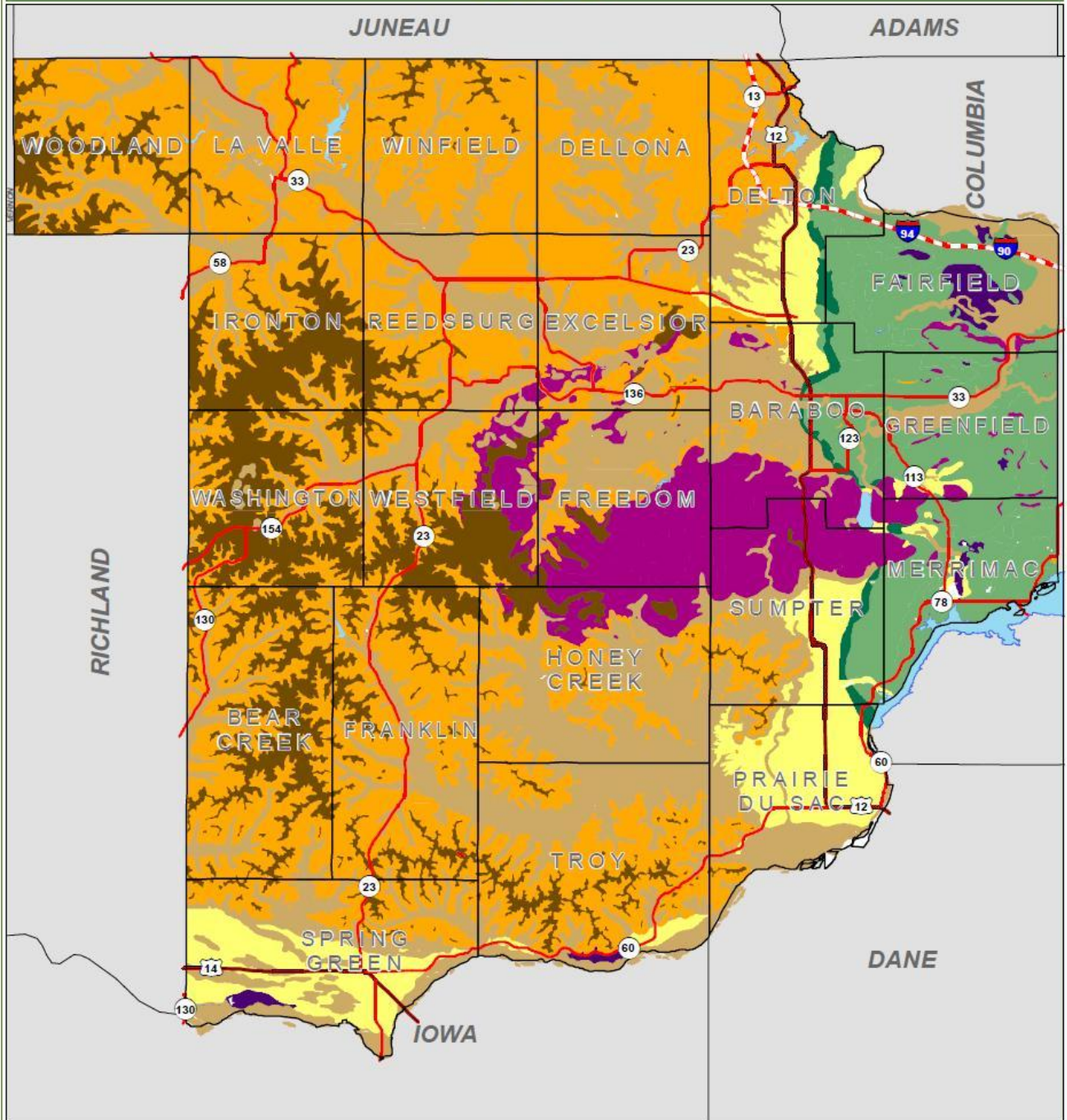
⁶ Sauk County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, January 2008. Sauk County Land Conservation Department, <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/LWRM%20Plan.pdf>

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid



GEOLOGY



Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

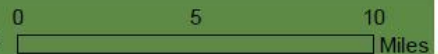
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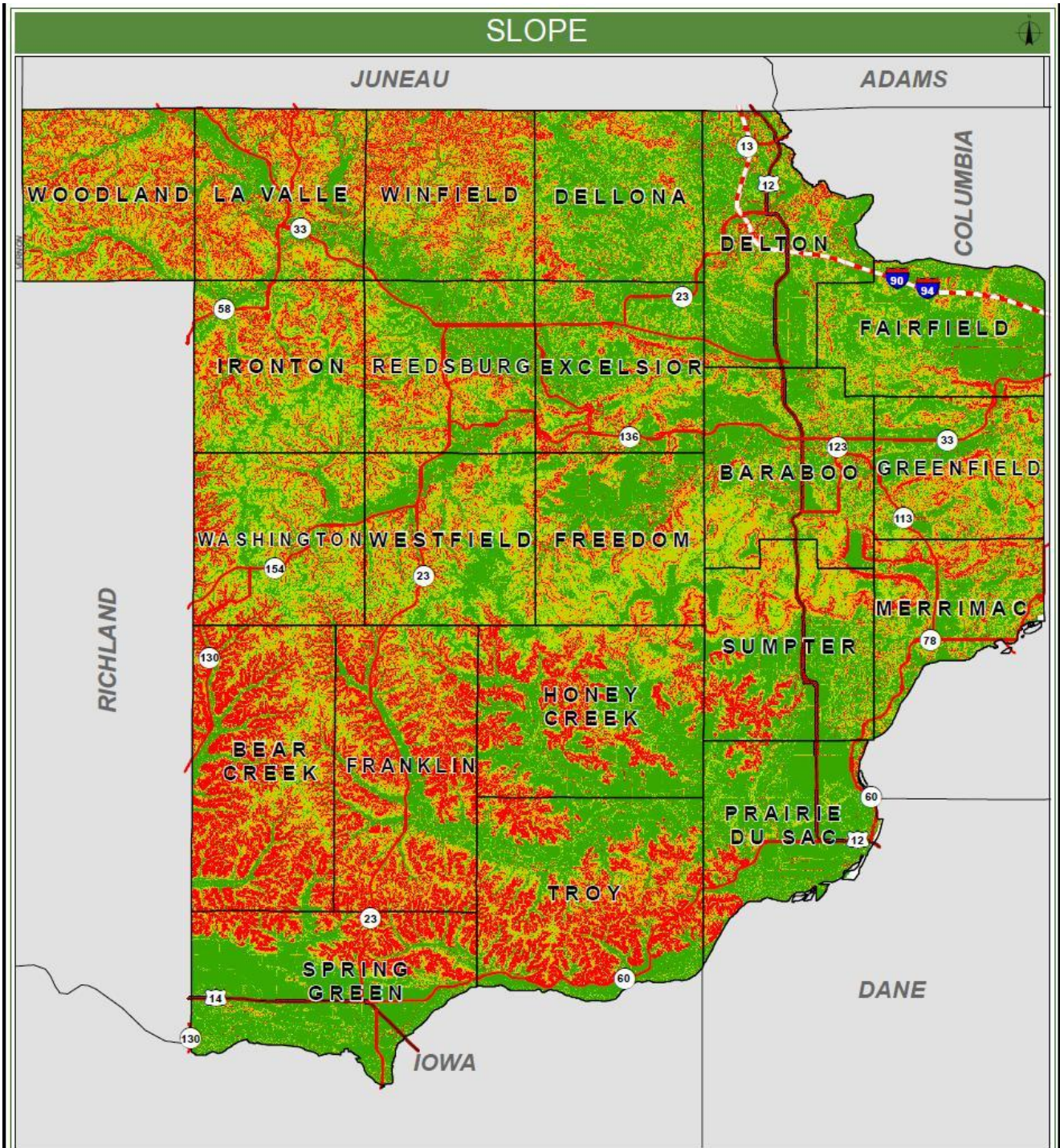
- | | | | | | |
|------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Towns | State | Bottom Land and River Terrace | Cambrian Sandstone | Outwash | St Peter Sandstone |
| Interstate | Ramp | Baraboo Quartzite | Organic | Prairie du Chien Dolomite | Till |
| Federal | | | | Terminal Moraine | |

Sauk County
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As of 1/1/2013, published only. Sauk County does not warrant the accuracy of the data contained herein and is not liable for any errors or omissions. Data contained in this map is derived from the best available information and is subject to change without notice.

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Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

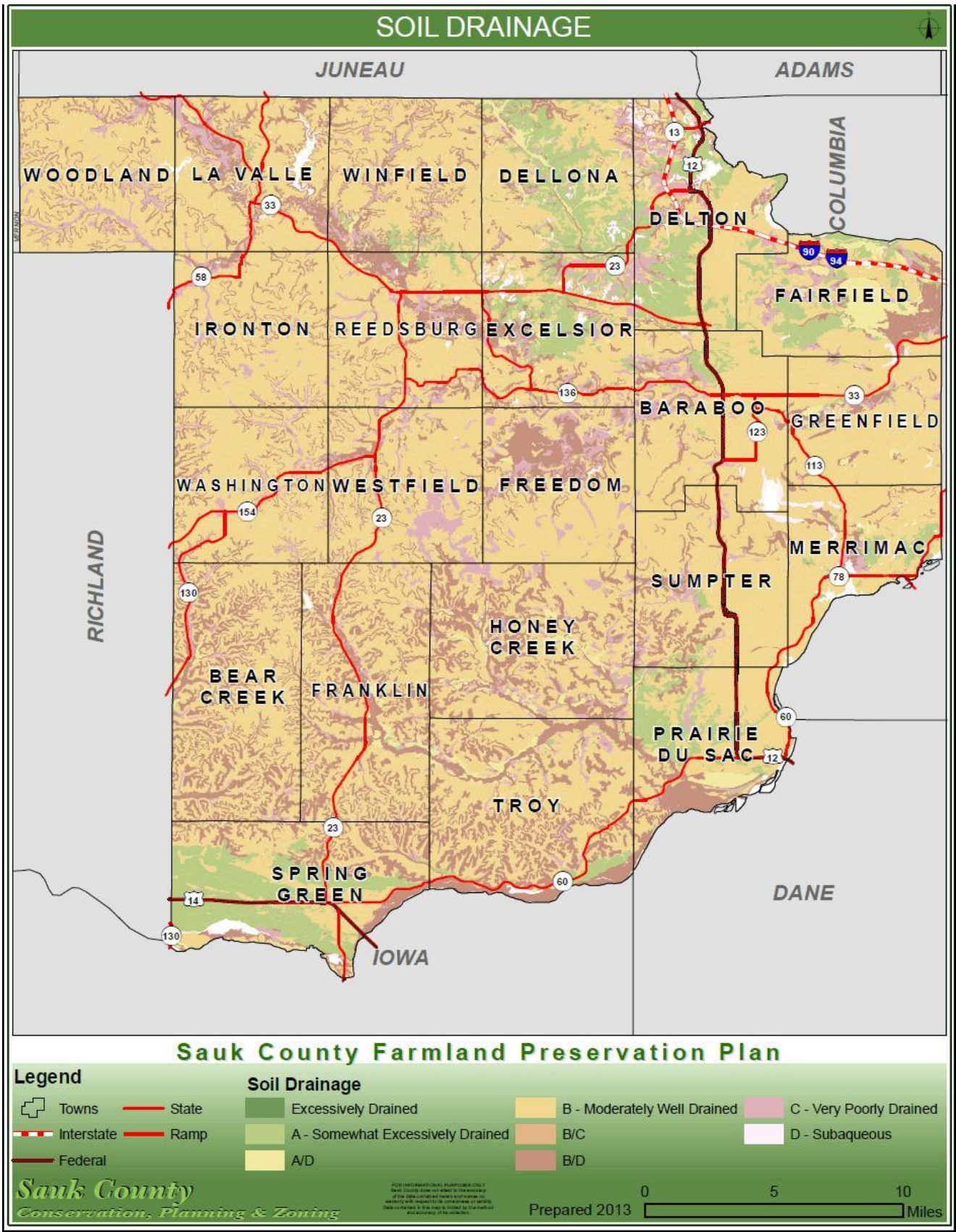
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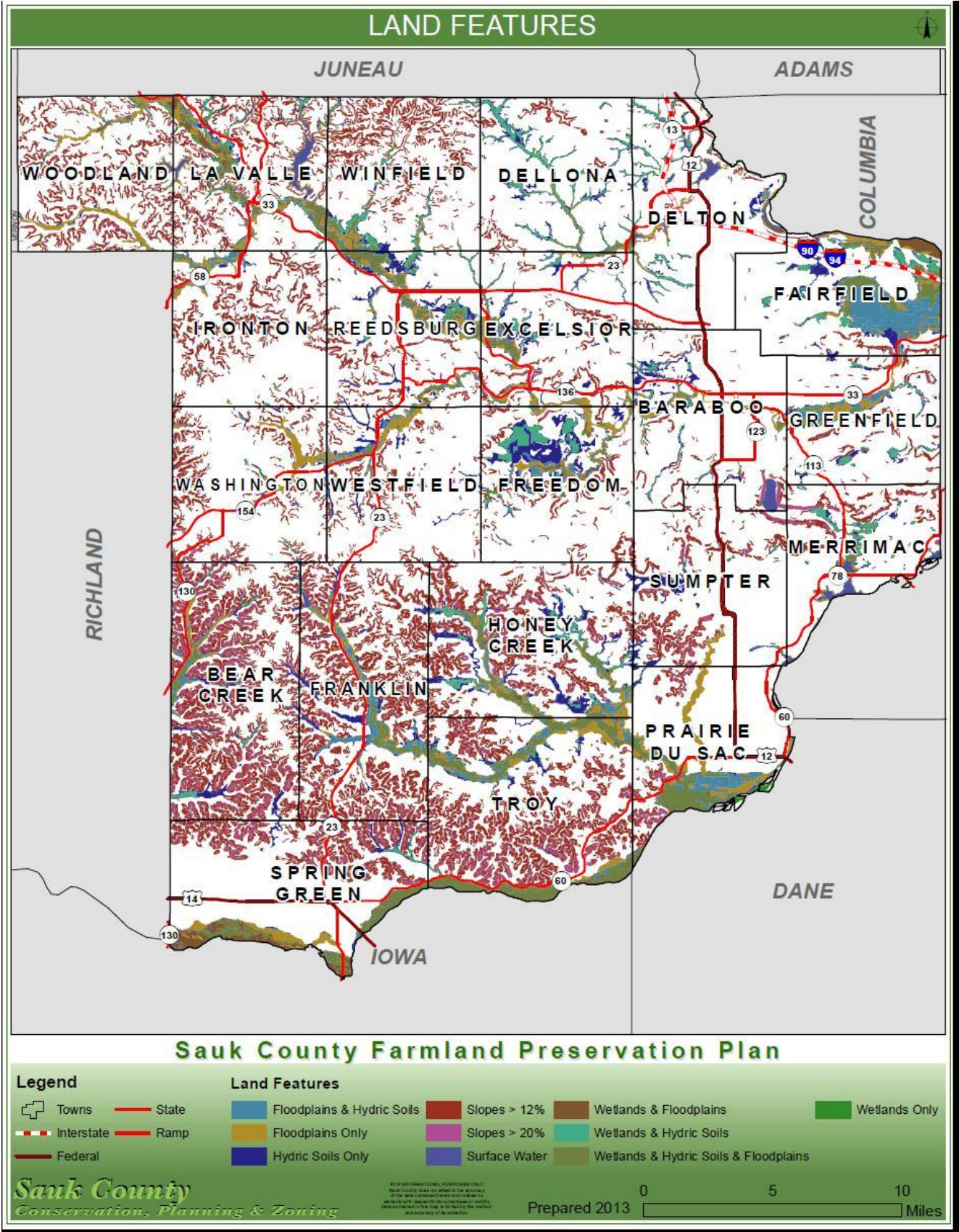
- Towns
- State
- 0 - 6% Slope
- 12 - 20% Slope
- Interstate
- Ramp
- 6 - 12% Slope
- 20 - 576% Slope
- Federal

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Water

All of the watersheds within Sauk County fall within the Lower Wisconsin River Basin. Many of Sauk County's streams are fed by permanent springs. Local differences in the quality of surface water and groundwater in these watersheds reflect current land use practices, the composition of soil and rock through which the water moves, and the length of time the water is in contact with these materials.⁹

Land uses affect the quality and quantity of surface water. Agriculture is the predominant land use in the county and has an influence on the surface water resource. Increased development in urban regions has also impacted water bodies through the potential increase in delivery of nutrients and other pollutants through storm water discharges as well as impacting the flow rates of rivers and streams with potentially increased peak flows and reduced average flow rates.

Water Supply and Use

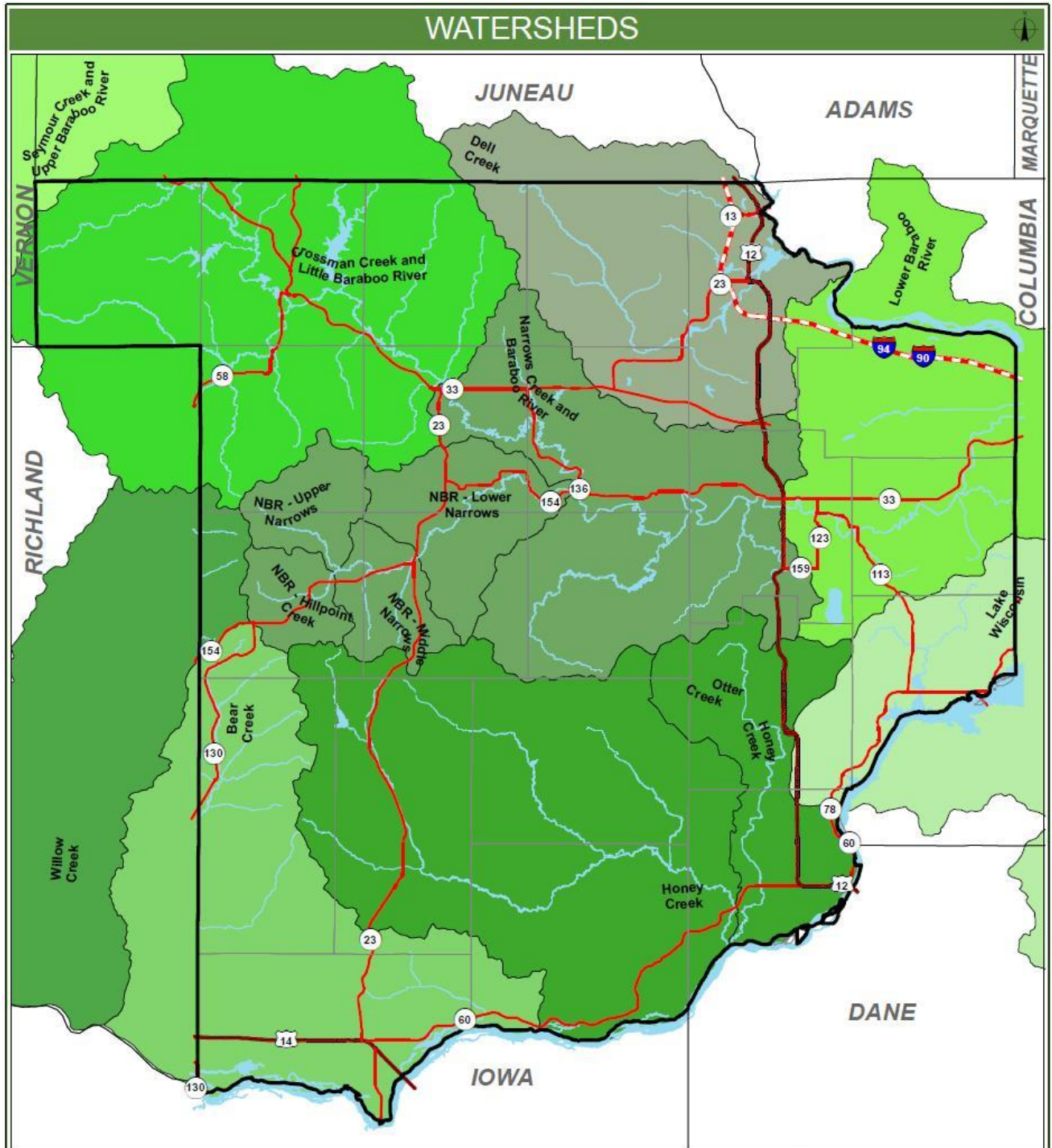
In Sauk County, water use has more than doubled since 1979, growing from an estimated 10.55 million gallons of water per day in 1979 to an estimated 26.39 million gallons of water per day in 2005.¹⁰

Sauk County water use by year <i>In millions of gallons per day</i>						
	1979	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Surface Water Use	00.08	00.09	00.17	00.14	00.13	00.40
Groundwater Use	10.47	10.96	16.00	19.34	23.42	25.99
Total Water Use	10.55	11.05	16.17	19.48	23.55	26.39

The amount of water used in the county for agricultural purposes such as irrigation, livestock, and aquaculture is shown in the next graph. Sauk County is fortunate to currently have a large enough supply of groundwater to meet its needs.

⁹ Sauk County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, January 2008. Sauk County Land Conservation Department, <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/LWRM%20Plan.pdf>

¹⁰ USGS "Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning", 2007, <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/sauk/index.html>



Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

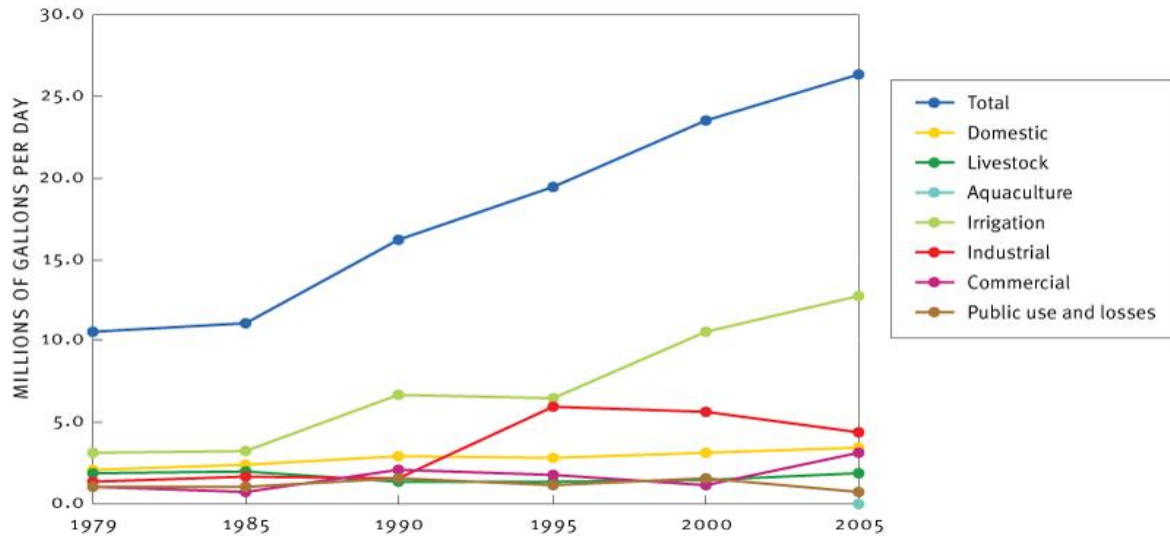
Legend		Watersheds	
Towns	State	Bear Creek	Honey Creek
Interstate	Ramp	Crossman Creek and Little Baraboo River	Lake Wisconsin
Federal		Dell Creek	Lower Baraboo River
		Narrows Creek and Baraboo River	Seymour Creek and Upper Baraboo River
			Willow Creek

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Sauk County water use by category



Water-use data from U.S. Geological Survey *Water Use in Wisconsin* reports for calendar years 1979, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005. figure created for the "Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning" web site, 2007, <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/>

Groundwater

As illustrated in the previous water use table, groundwater is the major source of water supply in Sauk County. Both quantity and quality of ground water can vary. Groundwater is found in varying depths throughout the county. General topography, the distance above the permanent stream level, and the geological character of the underlying rock formations are factors that influence the water's depth, location and quantity.

The differences in land uses along with the composition, solubility and surface area of particles of soil and rock through which the water moves, as well as in the length of time the water is in contact with these materials, results in local differences in the quality of groundwater in Sauk County.

The most common type of aquifer in the western portion of Sauk County is the sandstone and dolomite aquifer. It consists of layers of sandstone and dolomite bedrock units that vary greatly in their water yielding properties. Overall, this aquifer provides reliable supplies of water suitable for virtually all uses.

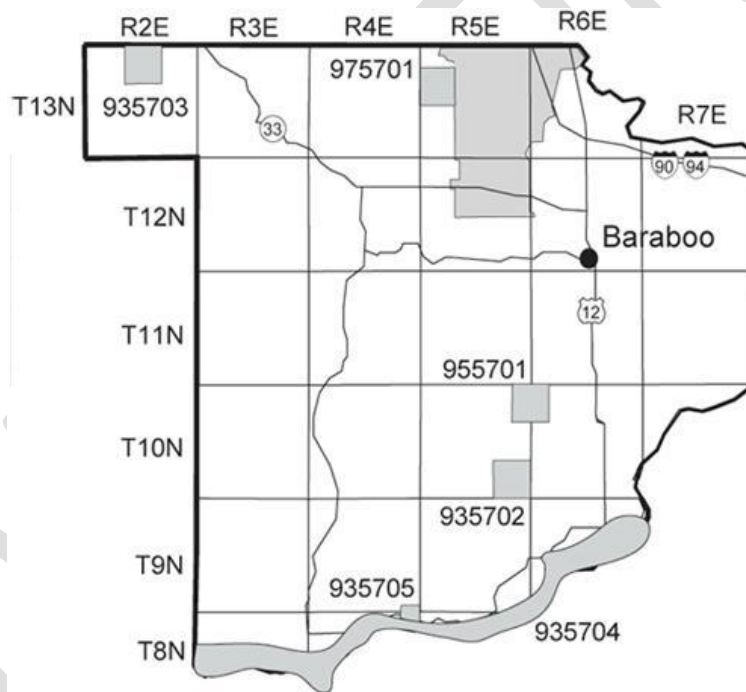
The east-central portion of Sauk County is underlain by quartzite bedrock. Drilling wells in these hard rock areas is expensive and yields are generally low, often barely sufficient for domestic purposes.¹¹

Another important source of groundwater is in the subsurface sand and gravel deposits along the Wisconsin River and the lower reaches of the Baraboo River. These deposits yield large quantities of water and are often susceptible to human-induced pollutants.

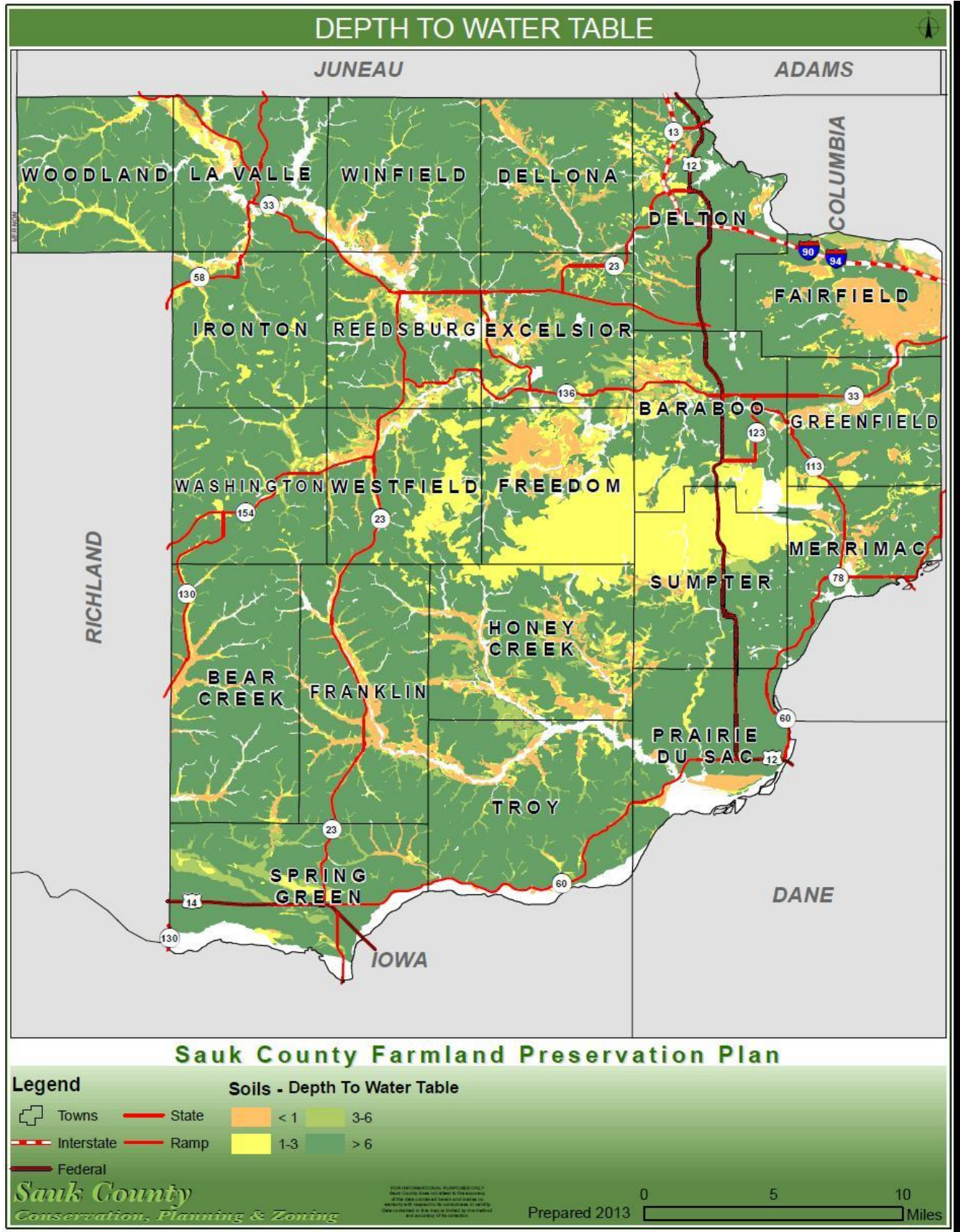
¹¹ Sauk County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, January 2008. Sauk County Land Conservation Department, <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/LWRM%20Plan.pdf>

Atrazine, coliform bacteria, and nitrates are common contaminants found in Sauk County’s groundwater resource. Nitrates appear to be the biggest threat to the county’s groundwater. Fertilizer, septic system effluent, animal waste, and landfills can all contribute to elevated nitrate levels. State and federal laws set the maximum allowable level of nitrate-nitrogen in public drinking water at ten parts per million (ppm). Based on groundwater samples analyzed by Sauk County Health Department, Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource (DNR), the highest nitrate levels came from the northeastern and southwestern portion of the county where the permeable soils facilitate the movement of nitrates into the groundwater.

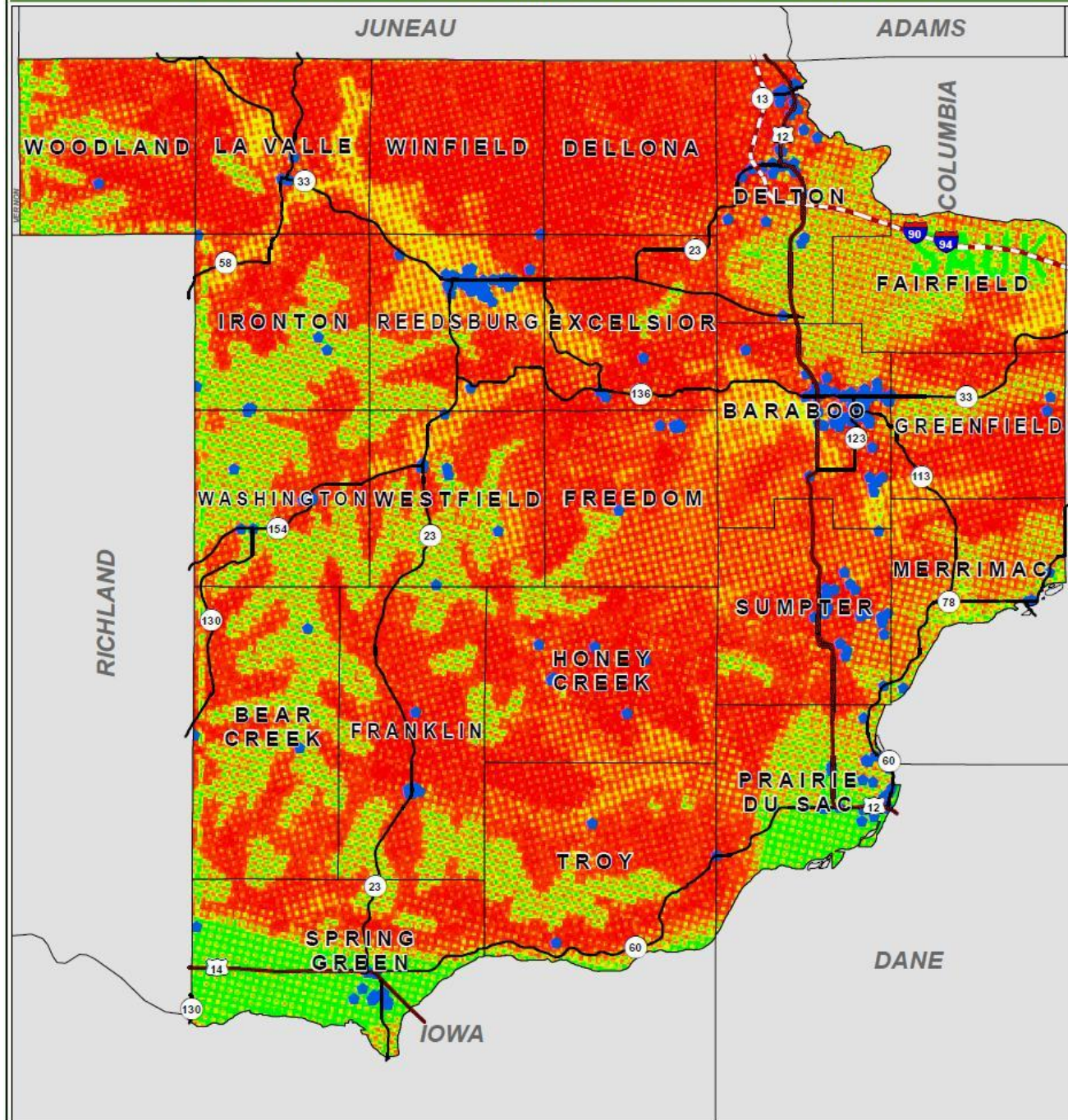
The map below depicts the county’s atrazine prohibition areas.¹² These are determined by a number of factors including soil type and places in which atrazine has been detected. These areas cover approximately 38,700 acres. The proper use of atrazine is not strictly enforced, although it is monitored by DATCP.



¹² <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/sauk/index.html> , Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection



GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION SUSCEPTIBILITY



Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

Legend

- Towns
- State
- Federal
- Interstate
- Ramp
- Open Contamination Site

- Least Susceptible to Contamination
- Highly Susceptible to Contamination

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Soil and Water Resource Management Programs Assistance

There are several programs available at the county level to assist agriculture producers and other landowners with managing soil and water resources. The Farmland Preservation Program provides participating farmers the ability to claim tax credits if they comply with soil and water conservation standards as set forth in the cropland standards, manure storage and management as well as livestock standards. The Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) Program administered by CPZ department, assists land owners by providing cost-share and technical assistance for the implementation of best management practices. CPZ also assists farmers with managing animal waste and conducts farm inspections to ensure that appropriate practices are in place.

The United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) both have offices in the West Square Building. The Sauk County FSA office provides disaster and drought information, assists farm producers with the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation compliance, and administers programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a voluntary program which provides financial incentive to landowners who wish to set aside marginal producing lands, provide habitat, reduce soil erosion and protect surface waters from sediments.¹³ A change in market demands, including increased ethanol production and organic farming, has contributed to the recent trend of declining CRP enrollment. Sauk County FSA also reports that Sauk County is seeing a trend of declining CRP enrollment. If market demands continue, it is anticipated that these trends will continue.

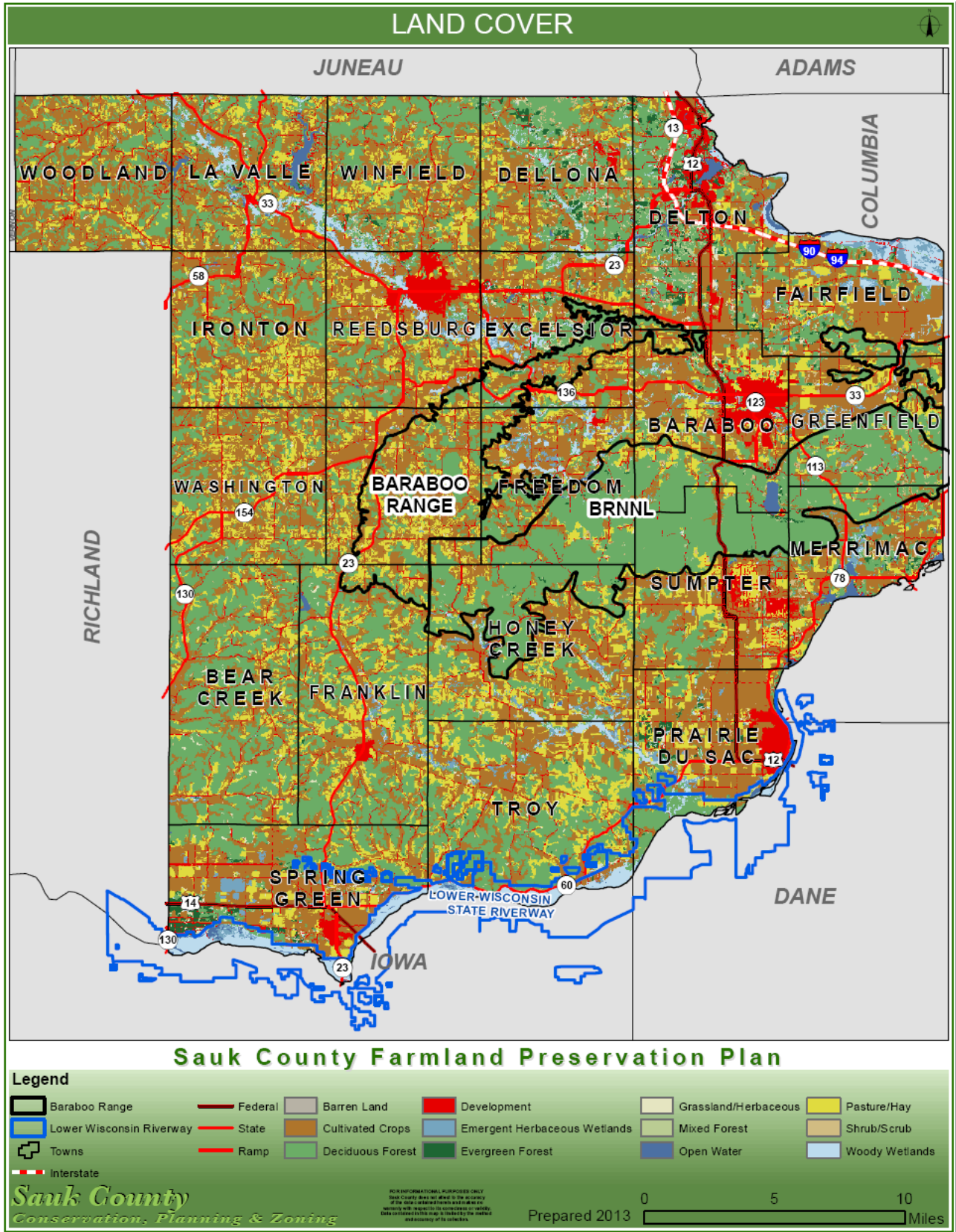
The NRCS assists landowners and farm operators with conservation plans which are designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals in ways that result in healthy ecosystems and productive lands, as well as administering programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).¹⁴

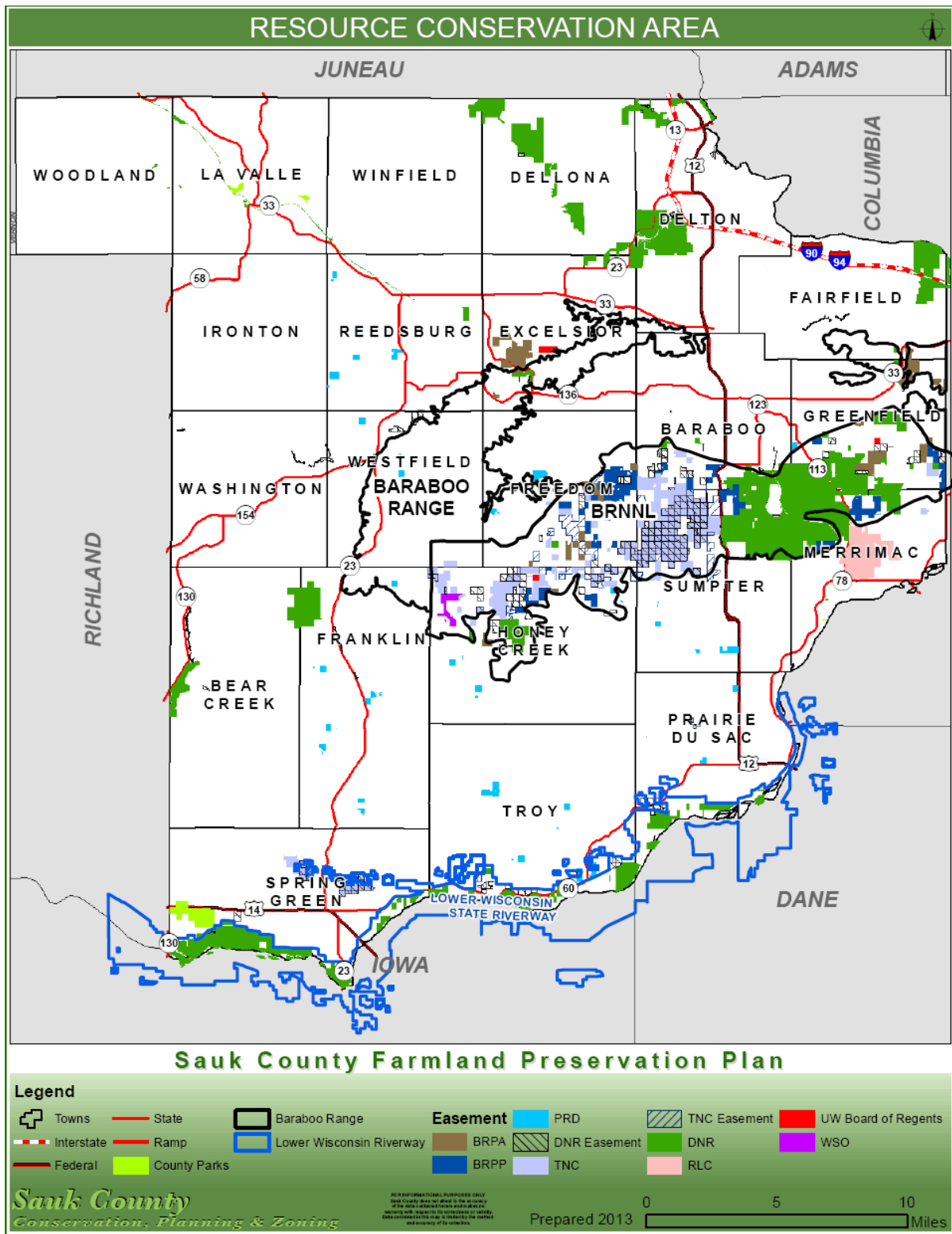
Natural Features and Resources

Approximately fifty-one percent of the land cover in Sauk County consists of crops, pasture and hay. Forests, including deciduous, evergreen or mixed forests comprise thirty-four and one-half percent of the land cover in Sauk County. A portion of these forests are considered agricultural forests. Within Sauk County, there are several natural areas with open waters, wetlands, non-agricultural forested lands, unique geological features, grasslands, varied plant habitats and outstanding scenic features. These areas comprise almost twenty-four percent of the land cover. Locations such as Wisconsin Dells and Devils Lake have been a draw for visitors for over 150 years. There are a variety of natural features and resources in the county being conserved and preserved, from private lands to local and county parks, from state, federal and tribal parks and lands to lands owned or managed by non-profit organizations and partnerships. As the Resource Conservation Area map depicts, these lands are scattered throughout the county with two areas of concentration creating environmental corridors: The Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark within the Baraboo Range, and the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

¹³ USDA, FSA <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp> March, 2013

¹⁴ USDA, NRCS <http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/> March 2013





Conservation Organizations and Programs at Work throughout Sauk County

As depicted on the Conservation Preservation Area map on the preceding page, many conservation groups and organizations own property in the county, much of which lies within or adjacent to the Baraboo Range Natural National Landmark (BRNNL) and the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (LWR). Non-profit organizations including The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology (WSO), the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, and the Riverland Conservancy (RLC) own and manage lands for conservation of unique ecosystem needs. The WI DNR manages Devils Lake, Natural Bridge, Rocky Arbor, and Mirror Lake State Park. Sauk County owns parks and forests around the county including White Mound, Redstone, Hemlock and Yellow Thunder Parks. Sauk County also administers the Planned Rural Development program which is aimed at preserving both agriculture and natural lands.

The Nature Conservancy

TNC is a private, non-profit conservation organization. Its mission is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. It does so through land acquisition from willing sellers or donors, entering into voluntary conservation easements agreements and by participating in land and forest management activities. TNC opens preserves to the public for hiking and bird watching, with some being open to deer hunters. In the Baraboo Bluffs, TNC owns 8,781 acres at ten preserves, including: Baxters Hollow, Hemlock Draw, Morgan Hone Preserve and Pine Hollow.¹⁵

Wisconsin Society of Ornithology

WSO was organized in 1939 to encourage the study of Wisconsin birds. The work of WSO has grown in scope and now includes supporting the research and habitat protection necessary to preserve Wisconsin birdlife, as well as participating in community education and outreach efforts. WSO owns, manages and preserves the Honey Creek Natural Area in the Baraboo Hills. This area comprises 263 acres of bog and woodland habitat and includes trails, picnic areas, rustic camping facilities, and the Cox Nature Center for local geology and habitat exhibits.¹⁶

The Riverland Conservancy

The mission of RLC is to promote the conservation, protection, and restoration of the lands, waters, and natural communities that comprise our environmental heritage. It works to achieve its mission through education, stewardship and partnerships. RLC is restoring and managing the Merrimac Preserve, more than 1,800 acres of forest, prairie, savanna, wetlands and streams which provide an integral wildlife corridor between the Baraboo Bluffs and the Wisconsin River.¹⁷

¹⁵ <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/wisconsin/placesweprotect/priority-area-the-baraboo-hills.xml>

¹⁶ <http://wsobirds.org/>

¹⁷ <http://www.riverlandconservancy.org/>

Sauk County Planned Rural Development Easements

Sauk County administers the Planned Rural Development (PRD) program as one means to ensure the preservation of agriculture lands while allowing for development at a density ratio of 1 home per 35 acres. Through the County PRD program, an agriculture landowner may develop parcels of land between one to five acres in size. In return, the landowner puts a preservation easement on agriculture or natural area lands which are equal in size to thirty-five acres less the developed parcel. The developed parcel must have minimal impact to the existing agricultural production and/or natural features of the land. As the Resource Conservation Area map depicts, there are many PRDs throughout the County, several of which lie within or adjacent to the Baraboo Range and Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

Baraboo Range

Located in central Sauk County, the Baraboo Range is a remnant of an ancient mountain range which exhibits scenic beauty and contains vast diversity of topology, geological features, microclimates, soils, plants and animal species.¹⁸ Within the Baraboo Range environmental corridor, twenty-eight different types of forest, wetland and prairie have been identified in the Bluffs, providing habitat over 1800 kinds of plants and animals, some of which are on the federal or state listed threatened or endangered species. As one of the largest tracts of hardwood upland forests in the Midwest, the Baraboo Range is crucial to many migrating and forest bird species¹⁹. The full extent of the Baraboo Range is outlined on two previous maps: the Land Cover map and the Resource Conservation Area map.

Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark

There are eighteen National Natural Landmark sites in the state of Wisconsin, one of which is within the Baraboo Range. The National Natural Landmark status recognizes this site as having geological and biological diversity, rarity and value. In recognition of the outstanding geological and ecological significance, 50,700 acres of the “South Range” were designated as the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark (BRNNL) in 1974, and as one of the seventy seven “Last Great Places” by the Nature Conservancy. The National Natural Landmark status helps to raise awareness and encourage the conservation of this area²⁰.

The BRNNL is outlined on both the previous Land Cover map as well as the Resource Conservation Area map. Portions of the BRNNL are owned by individuals or corporations, non-profit organizations, or State agencies. The land in the BRNNL is conserved by these individuals as well as through the efforts of partnerships and programs such as the Baraboo Range Protection Program and land trusts such as the Baraboo Range Preservation Association.

¹⁸ Dnr.wi.gov/topic/

¹⁹ The Nature Conservancy at www.nature.org

²⁰ The National Park Service at www.nature.nps.gov/nnl

Baraboo Range Protection Program

Sauk County adopted The *Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP)* Plan in 1999. Under the plan, the county purchased conservation easements in the Baraboo Range from willing sellers. These easement help preserve resources including wildlife habitat, rural livelihoods and farmland. Funding for the purchase of easements came from a settlement relating to the expansion of US Hwy12 from Middleton to Lake Delton. These easements are periodically monitored for agreement compliance.

Baraboo Range Preservation Association

The Baraboo Range Preservation Association (BRPA) is a land trust that ‘works to preserve and protect the qualities and culture of the Baraboo Range through promotion of ecologically responsible land use’.²¹ They do so through collaborative efforts with other organizations, education outreach and the purchase of easements tailored to the needs of the land and landowner.

Lower Wisconsin State Riverway

The Wisconsin River flows unimpeded from the dam in Prairie du Sac to the mouth of the Mississippi River in Prairie du Chien. This environmental corridor contains many habitats for wildlife and fisheries, sites of historical and archaeological significances as well as fantastic vistas. Two-thirds of the users of the LWR can be found on the portion which borders Sauk County; the area between Prairie du Sac and Spring Green. The LWR was established in 1989. There are six management units and four state natural areas within the Sauk County section of the LWR.²²

The LWR Board aims to protect approximately 80,000 acres of land on both sides of the river which make up the LWR. The goal of the Board is ‘to provide a quality public area for unique river corridor activities and compatible recreational pursuits; maintain the generally natural and scenic landscape of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway; and manage the corridor’s natural resources for the long-term benefit of the citizens of the area and state.’²³ The board administers a system of performance standards and issues permits for structures and a variety of activities occurring within the Riverway. Agriculture activities are exempt from permitting.

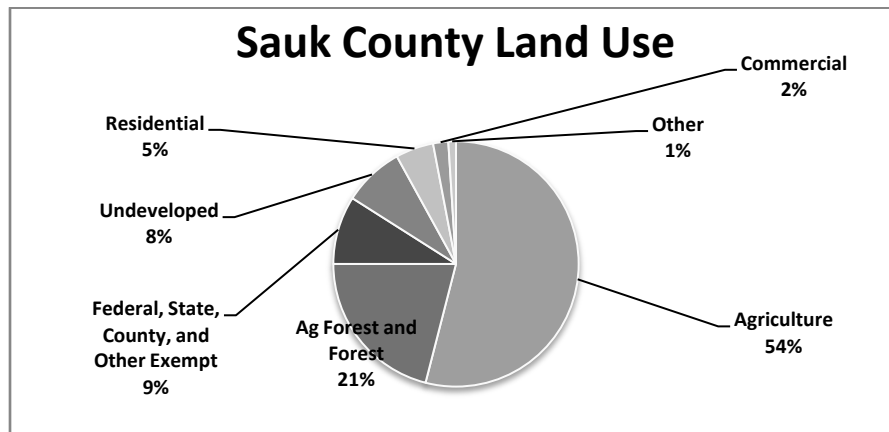
Land Use

Sauk County’s major land uses consist of agriculture and natural areas. The county also contains numerous incorporated cities and villages and Ho Chunk Nation lands. Each municipality has, over time, established plans and policies that guide future land uses, many of which help preserve farmland and promote agriculture development. The towns have established policies to maintain agriculture as the dominant land use. These policies may be reflected in their comprehensive plan, ordinances, extra territorial zoning, boundary agreements, memorandum of understanding or other related plans and agreements.

²¹ <http://www.baraboorange.org/>

²² <http://dnr.wi.gov>

²³ <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/lf/lf0055.pdf>



Farmland

The table below, unless otherwise noted reflects data for Sauk County as found in the Census of Agriculture. The increase of land reported as farmland in Sauk County between 1997 and 2007 coincides with the time Wisconsin began using value assessment and may be due to more lands being self-reported as Agriculture. The 2007 level represents approximately 68% of the county's land, including cropland, pasture and agricultural forests²⁴.

Agriculture Land					
	1992	1997	2002	2007	2010 ²⁵
Acres of Farmland	335,517	357,633	353,104	358,919	328,183
Number of Farms	1,383	1,452	1,673	1,923	N/A
Average Size of Farms (in acres)	243	206	211	187	N/A

In 2007, Sauk County had 1,923 farms, adding 250 farms since 2002. The average size of the farms has fallen from 211 acres in 2002 to 187 acres in 2007. According to 'Wisconsin Land Use , MEGATRENDS' published during the summer of 2010, large commercial farms had 43 percent of total farming acreage, but only 13 percent of the farms and between 1992 and 2010, mid-size farms declined and small farms doubled in number.

²⁴ UW Extension, Cooperative Extension Agriculture – Working Every Day for Wisconsin, 2011

²⁵ The Land Use Tracker, Volume 12, Issue 1, Summer 2012 Center of Land Use Education

Farm Land Use ²⁶	Acreage		
	1997	2002	2007
Cropland, harvested	180,060	185,927	184,191
Cropland used only for pasture or grazing	23,285	18,009	6,688
Cropland, other	19,214	19,537	18,726
Cropland idle or used for cover crop or soil improvement	NA	18,291	17,194
Woodland pastured	21,457	16,427	16,464
Woodland not pastured	63,367	65,910	74,613
Pastureland	70,110	60,551	56,039
Land enrolled in CRP or WRP	17,621	14,965	16,350
Land in organic	NA	1,082	2,526
Land in other crop insurance programs	NA	58,097	67,554

Between 1997 and 2007, the acreage of land utilized for grazing of pasture has dropped from 114,852 acres down to 79,191 acres and the acreage in organic production has doubled over a five year span. As world markets, biofuels and ethanol demands grow, the potential profitability increases and farmers seek to meet the needs CRP and set aside programs dollars are not keeping up with grain prices, driving many farmers to farm land that was set aside due to its potential to protect waters or erode. Sauk County FSA also reports that Sauk County is seeing a trend of declining CRP enrollment. If market demands continue, it is anticipated that these trends will continue.

Farmland Preservation Areas

Farmland preservation areas are primarily devoted to preserving agricultural and/or agricultural related uses, natural resource or open space areas and are identified on maps for each of the towns. These areas are eligible for Exclusive Agriculture Zoning, entering into an Agriculture Enterprise Area agreement and the benefits of other programs which may be implemented as a result of this plan.

Agriculture Enterprise Areas (AEA)

An Agriculture Enterprise Area (AEA) is an area of contiguous land which is primarily in agriculture use and is designated the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) in response to a locally developed petition. An AEA is only designated if it is identified by the local community as an area that should be preserved for current and future agricultural use. This local input into the process is important to achieve identified goals.

²⁶ 'Wisconsin Land Use , MEGATRENDS' UW Extension & the Center of Land Use Education, summer 2010

Eligible farmers in a designated area can enter into *voluntary* farmland preservation agreements with DATCP. Farmers with an agreement receive income tax credits in return for keeping their land in agricultural use for a minimum of 15 years. Tax credits available to farmers in an AEA are:

- \$5.00 per acre for farmers with a farmland preservation agreement signed after July 1, 2009 and located in an agricultural enterprise area.
- \$ 10.00 acre for farmers in an area zoned and certified for farmland preservation and in an agricultural enterprise area, with a farmland preservation agreement signed after July 1, 2009.

An AEA is one tool that can help individuals and communities meet locally identified goals for preserving agricultural land for continued production. In addition, AEA designations can help promote investment in agriculture, agricultural infrastructure and agricultural-related businesses. An AEA designation may be used in conjunction with other local land use and development strategies including farmland preservation planning and zoning, voluntary farmland preservation agreements, agricultural and conservation easements, private land use covenants, economic development grants, cooperative agreements or financial incentives.

The designated AEAs vary in size and type of agricultural land use, and in their overall goals for agricultural preservation and agricultural economic development. In Sauk County, one AEA currently exists. The Fairfield AEA was designated in 2011 and encompasses 9,501 acres in the Town of Fairfield. The Fairfield AEA has a strong public/private partnership supporting continued agricultural land use while protecting significant wildlife resources. The primary crops are vegetables, mint, and corn for ethanol. Seven petitioners applied and indentified the following goals in their application:

- Preserve large tracts of the diverse agricultural land and reduce potential land use conflicts.
- Preserve the large, contiguous expanse of highly productive muck soils which have a well established drainage system.
- Maintain and develop a high level of conservation, water quality and wildlife habitat in the area; in particular build upon the existing Farming and Conservation Together (FACT) partnership to integrate farming and wildlife management.

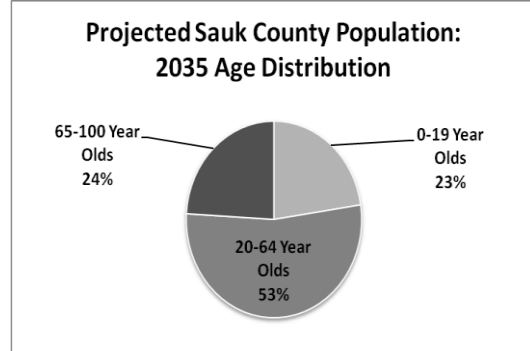
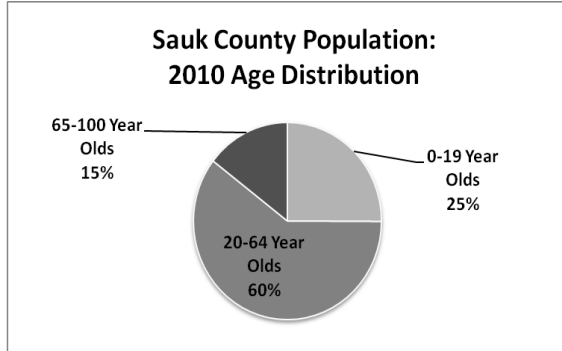
County Population, Demographics and Housing

Sauk County’s population stayed relatively steady from 1900 to 1940, spiked in 1950, and has been increasing since 1960. The US Census reported Sauk County population in 2010 as 61,976.

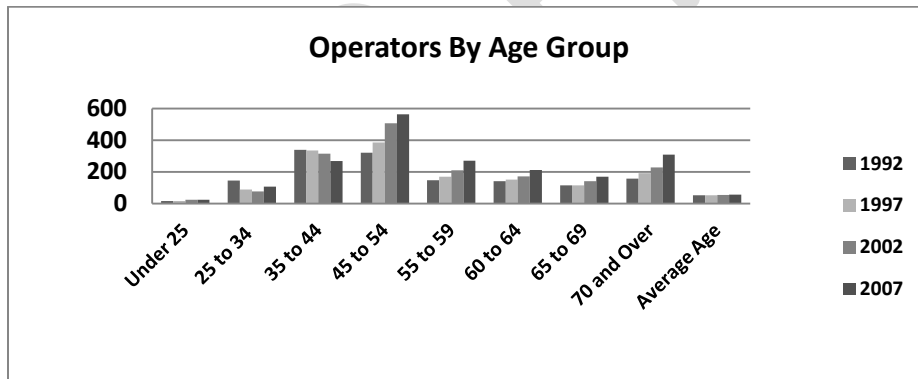
Sauk County Population Changes 1900 to 2010 ²⁷												
Year	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	33,006	32,869	32,548	32,030	33,700	38,120	36,179	39,057	43,469	46,975	55,225	61,976
% Change		-0.4 %	-1.0%	-1.6%	5.2%	13.1%	-5.1%	8.0%	11.3%	8.1%	17.6%	12.2%

²⁷ US Census Bureau

Population data projects a change in county demographics during the coming decades. Sauk County's population, along with the state and national populations, is aging. Between 2010 and 2035 the percentage of the county's population between the ages of 65 and 100, comprising 15% of the population in 2010, is projected to increase by 9% to 24% of the population by 2035.²⁸



The aging population trend is also reflected in the farming population. In 2007, the average age of farm operators was 55.2, up from 53.8 in 2002 and 52.8 in 1997.²⁹ Along with older farmers, many in the farm family are often employed off the farm. This is due to declining profitability, a search for stable wages, health insurance, and an increase in the number of smaller and hobby farms.³⁰



Sauk County ranks sixth in Wisconsin for the number of female farm operators, 1,007 in 2007, and eighth in the state for female principal operators, with 240 females working as principal operators.³¹

Housing and Municipal Growth

One way to examine municipal growth's impact on farmland is to consider lands annexed in to a municipality. As previously noted, the primary land uses in Sauk County are agriculture and natural areas. As municipalities grow, land from these areas is annexed. Since the year 2005, 2,005.5 acres of land has been annexed into incorporated municipalities.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ 'Wisconsin Land Use , MEGATRENDS' UW Extension & the Center of Land Use Education, summer 2010

³¹ UW Extension and 2007 USDA Agricultural Census

There is an increasing demand for housing due to rising population numbers and changing household patterns. According to the US census, the average household size was 2.19 people in 2010, down from 2.32 people in 2000 and 2.63 people per household in 1990. Since 1990 there has been an overall increase in population as well as an increase in seasonal housing throughout the county.

These increases have led to an increase in the number of households and housing units. Sauk County’s Zoning Ordinance, along with various local ordinances, addresses appropriate housing types for each zoning district.

Sauk County Household and Housing Unit Trends ³²		
Year	Households	Total Housing Units
1990	17,801	20,439
2000	21,644	24,297
2010	25,192	29,708

Sauk County does not issue building permits for incorporated areas. In Sauk County, the number of permits issued for new home construction in towns peaked during 2000 and decreased dramatically by 2010. The recession, which began in December of 2007, may have helped to alleviate the pressure to develop land for non-agricultural use and significantly decrease the speed with which new rural houses were constructed. Based on the trends of rural housing permits, it appears that most of the housing unit increase which is noted in the census data has been in areas incorporated as a village or city.

Sauk County Rural Lands Housing Permit Trends	
Year	Number of New Home Permits
1990	127
1995	199
2000	210
2005	183
2010	50

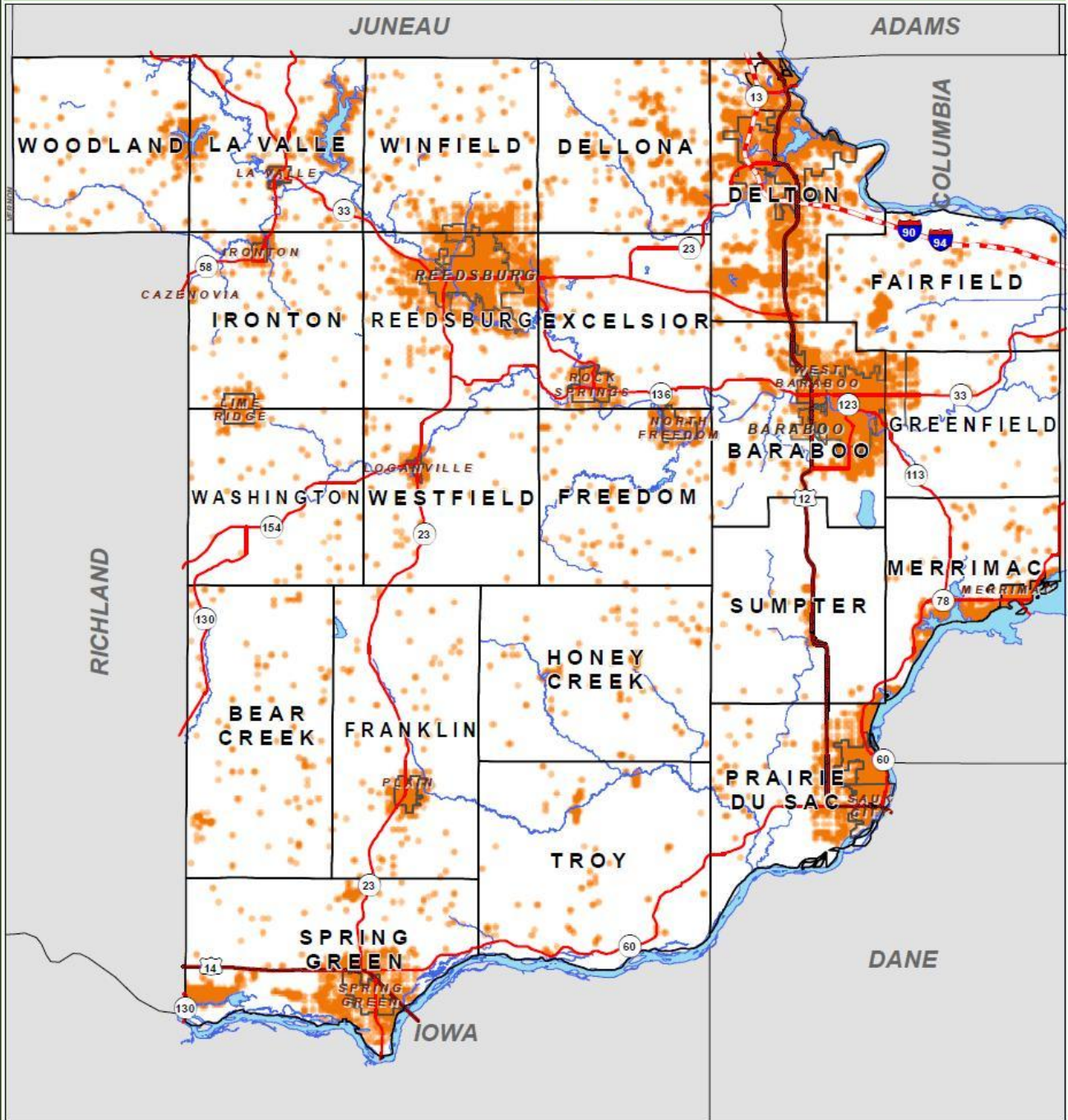
The Sauk County Comprehensive Plan and each local comprehensive plan address growth issues. Comprehensive plans are accessible on the Sauk County website. While most plans provide for residential or mixed use land use areas and encourage concepts such as infill and compatible land uses, there currently are no overarching plans dealing specifically with housing and municipal growth.

³² US Census Bureau, 2010, 2000, and 1990 censuses

Sauk County Density Credit Exchange/Transfer of Development Rights

In addition to the PRD program, the Sauk County zoning ordinance offers an option for towns to work with incorporated municipalities to develop and implement a Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR). The TDR is a regulatory strategy that incorporates private market forces to accomplish, in this instance, the protection of agricultural lands or other purposes such as the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. A TDR program can only be implemented following the designation of sending and receiving areas and application of a conservation easement. The TDR program acts as an extension of the PRD program, first implemented in 2006, and utilizes the same minimum siting criteria to locate the easements, except that rather than creating PRD lots in rural areas, the development rights are ‘sent’ to the incorporated area.

DEVELOPMENT



Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

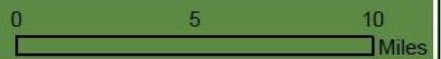
Legend

- Interstate
- State
- Federal
- Ramp
- Municipal Boundary
- City
- Town
- Village
- Future Density**
- Higher Density
- Lower Density

Sauk County
Conservation, Planning & Zoning

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Sauk County does not warrant the accuracy
of the data contained herein and makes no
warranty, expressed or implied, in regard
to the data contained in this map as shown by the method
and accuracy of the collection.

Prepared 2013



Transportation, Utilities, Communications and Community Facilities and Services

For any business, including our farms and agriculture-related businesses, access to needed resources, supplies and markets is essential for success and growth. The following is an overview of the transportation, utilities, communications and community facilities and services in Sauk County.

Transportation

Transportation networks influence the ability to transport both people and goods. It is estimated that agriculture makes up almost half of freight transportation in the United States.³³ In Sauk County, the major agriculture transportation methods are truck and rail.

In Sauk County, the roads are managed by the state, county and/or local municipalities. This network provides access to both local lands as well as to markets within and outside of the county. Most roads have weight limits and/or truck size postings. The postings denote the weight, and thus the amount of goods that can be transported on any given load. The Sauk County Highway Department's main facilities are located in West Baraboo with satellite facilities in other locations including Reedsburg. There are no plans to expand these facilities at this time.

The rail lines in Sauk County include the Wisconsin Southern Railroad, managing 22 miles of freight transport line from Merrimac to Reedsburg, and Amtrak into the Dells for passenger rail service.

Air transport includes Tri-County Airport (Spring Green), Baraboo/Dells Municipal Airport, Reedsburg Municipal Airport and the Sauk Prairie Airport. All of these provide small recreational, small passenger, business and freight services.

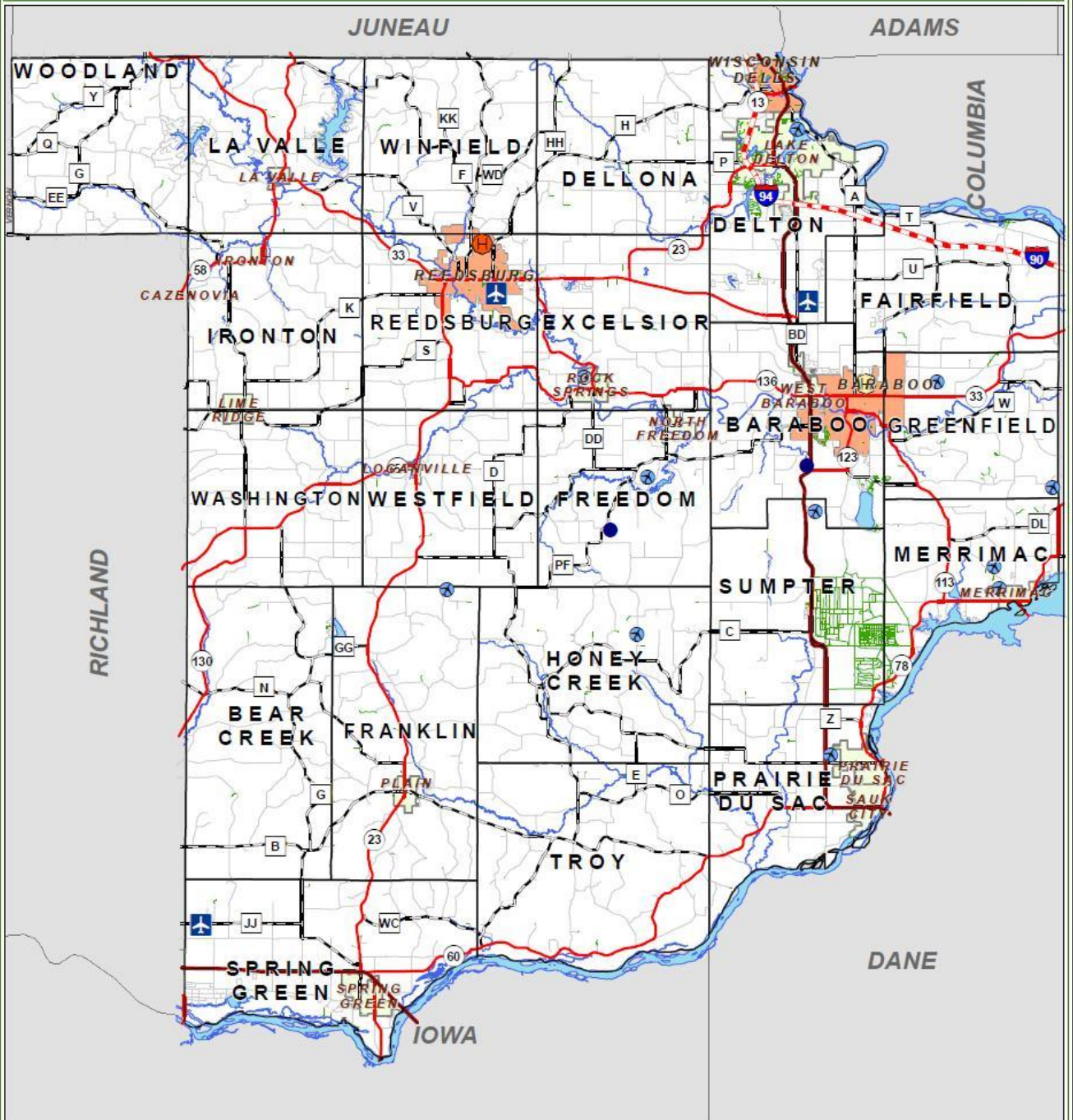
Plans for transportation include the Sauk County Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan, Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020, and Translink 21, A Multimodal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21st Century.

Utilities and Energy

Agriculture communities consume and create energy. In Sauk County, utility services, equipment and supplies are provided by Alliant Energy, Madison Gas and Electric, Premier Utility Services, and various local municipal utility districts and public works. A variety of companies provide alternative energy options including Amerigas, providing propane and Midwest Engineering Consultants providing solar energy products. There has been an increase in the capacity of transmission lines through Sauk County. Several new substations have been constructed or upgraded. There are plans to add a transformer in the Spring Green area and a line in the lake Delton area.

³³ Study of Rural Transportation Issues, USDA and US Department of Transportation, 2008, <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/RuralTransportationStudy>

TRANSPORTATION



Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan

Legend

Airports

Private Landing Strip

Private Heliport

Public Airport

Private Ultralights

Public Heliport

Municipal Boundary

City

Town

Village

Road Type

State

Interstate

Federal

Private-Named

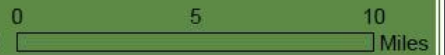
County

Town

Sauk County
Conservation, Planning & Zoning

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of any legal proceeding.

Prepared 2013



Ethanol

Ethanol is currently used as a fuel. In 2011, Wisconsin produced over 500 million gallons of ethanol, exporting approximately \$75 million dollars worth of ethanol, ranking Wisconsin second only to Texas in the value of exported ethanol.³⁴ Approximately 20% of the corn produced in Wisconsin is used for ethanol production.³⁵ The State has nine large scale commercial ethanol plants, two of which are in nearby Columbia County and one in Juneau County.

Anaerobic Digesters

Technology advancements are benefiting the agriculture community in many ways. One such advancement is the anaerobic digester. These convert waste from animal herds into energy. Anaerobic digester systems are increasing around the state, providing farmers the opportunity to mitigate odors, reuse manure, create some heat and electricity for themselves, possibly selling excess and earning some dollars.³⁶ In 2010, the state was leading the nation in number of on-farm anaerobic digesters, having 25 of the 151 in existence.³⁷ Wisconsin produces 95,638 megawatts of energy per year this way. Because of the cost, the typical system is designed for approximately 1000 cows. Some of the digesters serve individual farms with large dairy herds. Some digesters are used by several smaller farms as a community facility. There are currently no such digesters in Sauk County. In 2007 there were 23 farms in Sauk County with 500 or more cows.³⁸

Recent developments in this technology include co-digesters, which utilize multiple organic feed stocks and organic wastes and digesters suitable for smaller herds. Both are being studied for cost effectiveness.

Waste Management

Local governments manage the majority of solid waste and recycling services through contracts with private waste removal businesses. The old Sauk County landfill was managed by the county and is no longer operating, although methane from the landfill is converted into energy and sold for profit to Alliant Energy. Waste is now transported by private contractors to a landfill in Janesville. Sauk County sponsors an opportunity for households and agricultural businesses to safely dispose hazardous waste materials during annual Clean-Sweep events. Animal waste is regulated by DATCP, the DNR, and by Sauk County.

Communications

As the agriculture industry adapts to changing times, communicating information and sharing knowledge is essential. Sauk County's communication infrastructure is served in part by various cell

³⁴ Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, Inc <http://www.wicorpro.org/newsroom.php?id=92>

³⁵ Nebraska Energy Office

³⁶ 'Wisconsin Land Use , MEGATRENDS' UW Extension & the Center of Land Use Education, summer 2010

³⁷ Issues in Modern Agriculture, 2010 <http://olsonpr.com/2010/07/14/anaerobic-digesters-take-off/>

³⁸ USDA 2007 Agriculture Census

phone and internet providers, including US Cellular, Verizon, Charter Communications, Merrimac Communications, Bug Tussell and others. Sauk County has nine communication towers with fiber optics, which are also connected to the Sauk County Health Care Center and Sheriff's Department. The county is currently working on expanding service to the Highway Department and hopes to procure funding to connect several communities to the network. In Sauk County, 1,035 farms had internet access in 2007.³⁹ The available data does not indicate whether this access is through traditional phone line connections or high speed internet options. The increasing number of farms using computers for business purposes will potentially make communication more effective and efficient.

Farm Computer Usage in Wisconsin⁴⁰			
Year	Farms with Computer Access	Farms Using Computer for Farm Business	Farms with Internet Access
2009	73%	41%	67%
2007	69%	38%	58%
2005	64%	34%	56%
2003	62%	31%	51%
2001	61%	31%	46%

Agriculture Community Facilities and Services

Many of the public sector service agencies are located in the Sauk County Government offices located in the West Square Building in Baraboo. Offices at this location which provide services to the agriculture community include the Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department, Veterans office, Job Service Center, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Public Health, Human Services, UW-Extension offices, Emergency Management, WI DNR Foresters, and the USDA Service Center housing the FSA and NRCS offices. Some of the collaboratively developed agriculture related programs and services include Clean Sweep, Women Caring for the Land, The Sauk County Fair, Drinking Water Program, Youth Conservation Days, Conservation Chronicle Newsletter, Rural Safety Days, Sauk County Farm Connect Guide, as well as several association conferences and workshops designed to highlight and promote conservation, business development, health, research, technology and innovation in agriculture.

Education and Technical Assistance Networks

Growth, development and success in agriculture and related businesses depends on higher levels of agriculture education and research. One positive trend noted by participants in the Farmland Preservation Plan planning process is that training is beginning to include more business and economic education. Sauk County has many strong educational systems which range from public and

³⁹ 2007 Census of Agriculture, USDA

⁴⁰ Wisconsin 2010 Agricultural Statistics, USDA NASS in cooperation with WI DATCP

private K-12 systems to college and continuing education opportunities. Future Farmers of America (FFA), 4-H clubs and other organizations help support agriculture education and experiences for youth. The public libraries throughout the county and our proximity to high-quality, two- and four-year University of Wisconsin (UW) system college campuses further strengthen the overall education opportunities.

There are a variety of sources for information-sharing and continuing education opportunities designed specifically for the agriculture industry in Sauk County. The Madison College Reedsburg campus, UW Baraboo campus, and the UW-Extension programs disseminate research, knowledge and information. The UW-Extension also has an agricultural agent and a horticultural educator serving the county's communities. DATCP, NRCS, FSA, DNR, and the Sauk County CPZ department provide planning and technical assistance as well as educational outreach resources.

Health Care

General and specialized health care needs are met through several hospitals, clinics, urgent care and alternative care facilities located throughout the county. Sauk County owns and operates the County Health Care Center in Reedsburg since 1871. Unable to meet health care needs, a new center was constructed and it opened in 2009. The Sauk County Health Care is licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and participates in both the Medicare and Medicaid Programs. Serving over 80 persons, the center is dedicated to providing high-quality care to Sauk County and surrounding area residents in need.

The Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Southwest Wisconsin has offices in the West Square Building, downtown Baraboo. The ADRC provides transportation services, family caregiver support, home service coordination, prevention programs, a variety of information and assistance services and county wide senior dining centers. Sauk County has recently remodeled and reconfigured several office spaces in the West Square Building. ADRC is utilizing more office space made available as part of this remodel process so that they may provide programs and services which work to promote vital, healthy aging for all older adults in Sauk County.

The Sauk County Public Health Department protects and promotes healthy lifestyles, prevents and reduces disease and injury. They provide information on immunizations, voucher programs for uninsured and underinsured, and flouride tablet program for families on private wells.

The Sauk County Department of Human Services provides service for all county residents. Priorities include enhancing self reliance, protecting the vulnerable, and promoting healthy families, relationship and life styles.

Cultural Resources

Sauk County contains a variety of churches, cemeteries, historical and other cultural sites. Local comprehensive plans outline resources specific to each town, and the goals and objectives which are aimed at preserving these cultural resources. Comprehensive plans are accessible on the Sauk

County website. The variety of cultural resources found in Sauk County adds to the rural character and assist with preserving the historic and culture aspects of our agriculture community.

The Sauk County Arts, Humanities and Historic Preservation committee provides grants to community organizations and local governments seeking supplementary funds for local arts, history and humanities projects. Projects may include activities directed at research, documentation, and preservation of the unique cultural (including agricultural) history of Sauk County.⁴¹ Events such as Farm D/Art DTour help celebrate both the arts and agriculture with temporary art installations and artist-built mobile roadside culture stands selling fresh, locally grown produce. Field notes (rural culture education sites), farm forms (creations made by farmers, area businesses and community groups), pasture performances and more are found on the DTour.

The Sauk County Fairgrounds is managed by the Sauk County Agricultural Society. Several events take place every year including auctions, tractor pulls and the Sauk County Fair. All of these efforts help celebrate, promote and preserve the legacy of our agriculture community.

Emergency Responders

Emergency Responders provide services to the agriculture community in Sauk County. Several fire districts and emergency medical districts cover Sauk County. Each town contracts with a fire district and emergency medical ambulance service to cover their individual needs.

The Sauk County Sheriff's Department provides prisoner conveyance, court bailiff and security, as well as lake and snowmobile patrol services throughout the county. The department also provides patrol, investigative, warrant and civil processes to townships and municipalities without local services. Specialty teams include the Emergency Response Team, Critical incident Negotiations Team, Drug Enforcement, K-9 unit, Scuba Dive and Rescue Team, and Honor Guard.⁴² The Sauk County Law Enforcement Center includes the Huber Center and County Jail. The Center is relatively new and no expansion is anticipated in the near future.

Agriculture Infrastructure, Facilities and Technical Services

Agencies such as the University of Wisconsin, the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, Wisconsin Department of Administration, and many private firms offer information and technical assistance to the agriculture community in areas such as business planning and development, production management consultation, soil and water conservation methods, insurance and financial services. A successful agriculture industry also depends on access to a variety of supplies, inputs, technical assistance and services. Commodities need to be harvested, transported, refined, packaged, stored, marketed, sold and distributed. As production and markets diversify, the need for food processors, collectors, storage and distribution sites for specialty or organic products may grow as well. Market needs, county and local ordinances will determine the best location for

⁴¹ Sauk County Arts and Culture, <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/artsandculture>

⁴² Sauk County Sheriff's Department

facilities. The following two tables highlight the variety of facilities and services which are a part of the Sauk County agriculture facilities and technical services infrastructure.

Sauk County Agriculture Facilities and Services	
Facility/Service	Name and Location of Sauk County Facilities
Agronomy Services, Consultation or Engineering Services, Custom Application or Transport Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eagle Valley Ag Services, LLC, Prairie du Sac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook’s Countryside Trucking, Denzer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Meyer & Sons, Reedsburg • MSA Professional Services, Baraboo • Team Engineering, Inc, Loganville • Vierbicher Associates, Inc, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baraboo Power Equipment, Baraboo • Baumgarten Badger Farm Service, North Freedom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bindl Sales and Service, Reedsburg, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blains Farm and Fleet, Baraboo • Doctors Choice Supplements, Prairie du Sac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ederer Dairy Supply, Plain • Glacier Valley Enterprises, Baraboo • Harms Dairy Equipment, Rock Springs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J & J Sales, LLC, Prairie du Sac • Koenecke Equipment, Reedsburg • Lime Ridge Agri Supply, Lime Ridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L & N Tractor, Prairie du Sac • McFarlane True Value, Sauk City • Mid-State Equipment, Prairie du Sac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pecks Feed Inc, Spring Green • Prairie View Feeds, Inc, Prairie du Sac • Premier Auto and Truck Parts, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Products, Spring Green • Reedsburg Farmers Cooperative Feed, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reedsburg True Value, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schultz Enterprises, Baraboo • South Central Supply, Baraboo • United Cooperative, Baraboo, Sauk City and Prairie du Sac
Farm Equipment and Feed/Seed Dealers and Suppliers	

Sauk County Agriculture Facilities and Services

Facility/Service	Name and Location of Sauk County Facilities
Farmers' Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baraboo Farmers' Market • Reedsburg Area Medical Center's Farmers' Market <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reedsburg Farmers' Market • La Valle Farmers' Market • Sauk Prairie Farmers' Market • Spring Green Farmer's Market • Wisconsin Dells Thunder Valley Farmer's Market
Food Processing and Packing Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carr Valley Cheese, La Valle • Cedar Grove Cheese, Plain • Foremost Farms USA, Reedsburg • Grauvogl Meat Service, North Freedom • Hart and Vold Meat Market, Baraboo • Lakeside Foods Inc, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meat Market, Baraboo • Prem Meats and Catering, Spring Green • Reedsburg Egg Company, Reedsburg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straka Meats, Plain • Willow Creek Farms Charcuterie, Inc, Prairie du Sac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wyttenbach Meats, Prairie du Sac
Organizations, Research and Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated Genetics • Foremost Farms USA, Baraboo • Sauk County Farm Bureau, Baraboo • USDA Dairy Forage Research Center, Merrimac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meister Log & Lumber, Reedsburg • Pearson's Saw Mill, Reedsburg
Sawmills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stoltz's Custom Lumber Sawing, Spring Green <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbergreen Farm, Spring Green • Zobel Ray and Sons Inc, Reedsburg
Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Cooperative, Rock Springs, Sauk City and Prairie du Sac

Other Regional Agriculture Related Facilities and Services	
Facility/Service	Location
Agribusiness and Farm Incubators and Community Kitchens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Farley Center, Dane County • Madison Community Kitchen, Madison, Dane County • Mazomanie Heritage Kitchen, Dane County • Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen, Mineral Point, Iowa County
Biodiesel Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanimax Energy Biodiesel Plant, DeForest
Ethanol Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Didion Milling, Cambria, Columbia County • United Wisconsin Grain Producers, Friesland, Columbia County
Manure Digesters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Rose Dairy, La Farge, Vernon County, designed by Microgy, Inc., with utilities operated by Dairyland Power Co-op • Waunakee Digester, Dane County • Middleton Digester, Dane County
Organizations, Marketing Research and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin, DATCP

Economic Growth and Business Development

Sauk County has many features which contribute to its ability to develop and maintain economic diversity and a viable agriculture business community including quality education, research and development services, transportation networks, natural resources, rich soils, an able workforce, as well as access to a variety of health facilities, business and industry support systems and markets.

Overview of Sauk County's Economy

The Sauk County Development Corporation works to promote and retain economic vitality in Sauk County and its individual communities. The following table shows that from 1990 to 2010, county residents increased employment in education and health, public administration and information sectors. There has been a relatively stable employment of residents (within one percentage point) in professional and business services, and the construction sectors. Resident's employment in the leisure and hospitality, trade transportation and utilities, manufacturing, agriculture, and other services have declined over the 20 year span.

Sauk County Employment Sectors⁴³	Residents employed during 1990	% of total employed in 1990	Residents employed during 2000	% of total employed in 2000	Residents employed during 2010	% of total employed in 2010
All Industries	22,987		29,108		32,845	
Leisure and Hospitality	3,935	17.12%	3,525	12.11%	4,804	14.63%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	5,510	23.97%	5,928	20.37%	6,408	19.51%
Manufacturing	5,528	24.05%	5,554	19.08%	5,658	17.23%
Education and Health	3,105	13.51%	5,130	17.62%	5,796	17.65%
Agriculture	2,458	10.69%	1,577	5.42%	1,443	4.39%
Public Administration	655	2.85%	1016	3.49%	1,293	3.94%
Professional and Business Services	2,326	10.12%	2,776	9.54%	3,084	9.39%
Construction	1,751	7.62%	2,282	7.84%	2,545	7.75%
Other Services	1,144	4.98%	915	3.14%	1,229	3.74%
Information	268	1.17%	425	1.46%	585	1.78%

Sauk County Average Wage⁴⁴		
Major Industry	Sauk County Annual Average Wage, 2008 Level	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage, 2008 Level
Construction	\$46,925	\$49,658
Professional and Business Services	\$40,249	\$45,114
Manufacturing	\$40,019	\$48,116
Financial Activities	\$39,158	\$52,008
Education and Health	\$36,444	\$41,222
Natural Resources	\$31,827	\$31,227
Public Administration	\$31,077	\$41,040
All Industries	\$30,534	\$39,169
Trade, Transport, and Utilities	\$26,499	\$33,604
Information	\$26,216	\$49,838
Other Services	\$18,575	\$22,628
Leisure and Hospitality	\$14,954	\$14,102

⁴³ U.S. Census, 1990, 2000 and 2010

⁴⁴ WI DWD, Workforce Training, QCEW, June 2009

Agriculture and the Economy

Agriculture plays an essential role in Wisconsin and Sauk County economies. Approximately one out of every ten Wisconsin residents works in an agriculture-related job, with “every job in agriculture support[ing] an additional .89 jobs in Wisconsin”.⁴⁵ Since 2006 there has been relative stability in Wisconsin’s agriculture employment, with some experts saying that agriculture helped “cushion” employment problems in Wisconsin’s economy during the 2007 recession.⁴⁶ In Sauk County, approximately ten percent of jobs are provided by the agricultural sector, making agriculture the fifth largest sector in the County in terms of employment and accounts for almost eight percent of the County’s total income.⁴⁷ Horticultural sales contribute approximately \$5.6 million to the County economy, as well as providing many full time and seasonal jobs.⁴⁸

The Sauk County agriculture related-industries include:

- research and production
- aquaculture
- beef
- pork
- poultry
- slaughterhouses
- dairies
- cheese makers
- sawmills
- pick-your-own fruits or vegetables
- orchards
- seasonal garden centers
- floriculture
- horticulture
- landscape businesses
- cooperatives
- custom farm services
- farm equipment
- feed dealers and suppliers
- economic support services
- transport
- farmers markets
- organic goods
- community supported agriculture
- greenhouses
- pumpkin patches
- corn mazes
- Christmas tree farms
- maple syrup production
- honey producers
- sports clubs
- game farms
- agronomy services
- consultation services
- custom application services
- transport services
- food processing
- packing facilities

⁴⁵ Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin: 2012 Status Report, Silva et al, February 2012

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ The Economic Impacts of Agriculture in Wisconsin Counties, Deller and Williams, UW Extension 2011

⁴⁸ Farm News: Survey Shows Agriculture Key to State Economy. Wisconsin Farm Report

Approximately eleven percent of Sauk County’s total business sales come from agriculture-related activities with \$ 20.3 million being contributed to local and state sales, property and income taxes.⁴⁹ Wisconsin was fifteenth in the nation for exports during the first quarter of 2012, with a total of \$700 million of agricultural products exported. This is a sixteen percent increase over the first quarter of 2011.⁵⁰

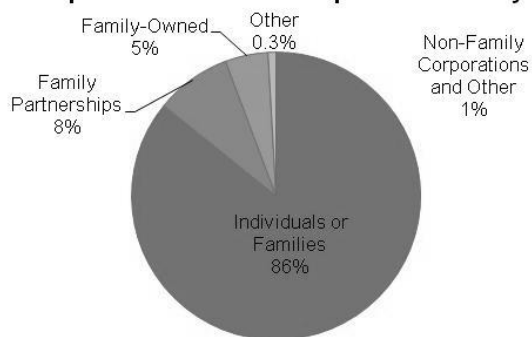
The following table illustrates the overall economic effects agriculture had in Sauk County:

Economic Effects of Agriculture in Sauk County During 2008⁵¹	
Economic Activity	Amount
The sale of farm products and value-added products.	\$457.5 million
Business to business purchases such as fuel, seed, feed, veterinary services, and financial services.	\$168.7 million
Business to business activity in sales as agricultural workers spend their earnings.	\$49.6 million

Agriculture Production

In 2007, the vast majority of the farms in Sauk County were owned by individuals or through some type of family arrangement.

Graph 4.51: Farm Ownership in Sauk County



These farms manage and generate a wide variety of products including beef, lamb, pork, chickens and eggs, turkey, rabbit, milk, elk, bison, horses, goats, pheasant, quail, fish, grains, fruits, herbs, vegetables, bedding plants, wood, maple syrup, honey and sorghum as well as seed for crops, native habitat restoration and gardens. The following table illustrates that from 1997 to 2007 the number of farms involved with livestock poultry, cattle and calves, dairy, and hogs and pigs production have declined. The

⁴⁹ Farm News: Survey Shows Agriculture Key to State Economy. Wisconsin Farm Report

⁵⁰ Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, Inc <http://www.wicorpro.org/newsroom.php?id=92>

⁵¹ UW Extension, Sauk County Agriculture Value and Economic Impact, 2011

number of farms involved in all other types of agriculture production has increased.⁵² Those that participated in the listening sessions and discussion groups felt that these trends are likely to continue.

Commodity	Number of Farms in Sauk County		
	1997	2002	2007
Crops	888	800	1286
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	Data not available (na)	597	720
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	na	52	47
Fruits, tree nuts and berries	11	19	27
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod	na	27	35
Cut Christmas trees & short rotation woody crops	na	10	11
Other crops and hay	na	366	516
Livestock poultry & their products	1168	873	983
Poultry and eggs	63	64	208
Cattle and calves	1029	725	766
Milk and other dairy products from cows	506	341	285
Hogs and pigs	117	88	68
Sheep goats and their products	na	51	79
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	na	51	59
Aquaculture	na	3	2
Other animals and products	na	27	40

In 2007, Sauk County had more chickens for egg production than any other county in Wisconsin. The county also has the second highest population of hogs and pigs and is the third largest producer of honey in the state. Additionally, Sauk County is home to one of only three farms in the United States milking water buffalo for specialty cheese production.

⁵² Census of Agriculture County Data, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Services 2002 and 2007

Comparative Quantity of Production⁵³		
Product	Production	Ranking within the State
Layers (Chicken)	317,318	1
Hogs and Pigs	46,588	2
Honey	165,597 lbs	3
Sunflower Seeds	4,400 lbs	6
Sheep and Lambs	2,605	9
Horses and Ponies	2,887	9
Corn for Grain	10,488,049 bu	9
Cattle and Calves	83,833	12
Broilers and Other Meat Chickens	5,491	13
Llamas	141	13
Goats	1,086	16
Soybeans	1,047,263 bu	18
Wheat for Grain	292,367 bu	22
Oats for Grain	174,387 bu	27

Economically Significant Commodities⁵⁴		
Product Sold	Sauk County 2007 Sales	Ranking within the State
Dairy Products	\$94,905,000	17
Cattle and Calves	\$26,678,000	9
Corn	\$24,032,000	12
Hogs and Pigs	\$10,220,000	2
Soybeans	\$7,662,000	17
Poultry and Eggs	\$5,830,000	9
Vegetables, Melons, Potatoes, and Sweet Potatoes	\$3,557,000	22
Wheat	\$1,329,000	23
Fruits, Tree Nuts, and Berries	\$1,257,000	16
Sheep, Goats, and their Products	\$691,000	6
Horses, Ponies, Mules, Burros, and Donkeys	\$291,000	14

⁵³ USDA 2007 Agriculture Census

⁵⁴ USDA 2007 Agriculture Census

Reports of both the number of farms as well as the acres in specialty crops are increasing in Wisconsin. The number of small farms doubled between 1992 and 2010.⁵⁵ The small, rural residential farms are comprised of hobby farms, direct marketing operations and often rely on other sources of income. Between 2002 and 2007 direct sales through farmers markets, community supported agriculture, roadside stand, and on-farm sales have doubled. The growth of certified organic farms is even greater.⁵⁶ Those that participated in the listening sessions and discussion groups felt that these trends are likely to continue.

Organic Agriculture

Organic agriculture is a rapidly growing sector. The fastest growing areas in Wisconsin organic production include vegetable production and dairy. During 2007, Wisconsin was in the top five states in certified organic acreage with 195,603 acres and in the top five in production of all major organic crops and livestock types.⁵⁷ During 2007, Wisconsin was leading the nation in terms of the number of organic farms, with 1,222 organic farms, second only to California.⁵⁸

Research shows that from every dollar generated for the sale of raw agricultural products, \$1.24 in economic activity is generated through the purchasing of inputs, job creation and the resulting spending in local communities. Studies show that while organic production tends to result in smaller amounts of purchased inputs, it involves more labor and more job creation than conventional production, and overall it results in a larger amount of economic activity on a per-acre basis for labor and local spending than conventional farming.⁵⁹

Direct Sales and Agritourism

There is a growing interest in developing local, regional food markets. A number of programs at the state level, such as 'Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin' and 'Something Special from Wisconsin' are geared towards supporting direct sales, agritourism, as well as locally grown and processed products.

Direct-marketing sales are increasing, with 137 farms earning \$727,000 this way in 2007.⁶⁰ There are a growing number of CSAs and farmers' markets, with at least six farmers' markets operating in the county. The number of roadside stands is not currently tracked. There are no institutional markets in the County at this time. Direct sales are one way producers are diversifying their income strategies. Between 1992 and 2007, the average direct sales per farm have increased greatly since 1992 and this trend is anticipated to continue.

⁵⁵ USDA Agriculture Census, 1997, 2002, and 2007

⁵⁶ 'Wisconsin Land Use , MEGATRENDS' UW Extension & the Center of Land Use Education, summer 2010

⁵⁷ The Economic Impact of the Organic Sector in Wisconsin and Beyond, Laura Paine, Organic Agriculture Specialist WI DATCP, June 2011

⁵⁸ 2007 USDA Agriculture Census and the 2008 USDA Organic Production Survey

⁵⁹ Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin: 2012 Status Report Silva et al

⁶⁰ UW Extension, Sauk County Agriculture Value and Economic Impact, 2011

Average Direct Sales Per Farm⁶¹		
Year	Sales	Farms
2007	\$93,510	1,923
2002	\$69,375	1,673
1997	\$6,075	82
1992	\$3,140	66

Value-added operations are those that include any activity an agricultural producer performs outside of traditional commodity production to receive a higher return per unit of commodity sold. This includes activities such as agritourism and entertainment agriculture. On average, successful agritourism operations bring in greater total sales and have less debt than many other value-added operations.

Comparison of Wisconsin Agritourism and other Value-Added Operations⁶²		
	Agritourism Operations	Other Value-Added Operations
Acres Owned	135	195
Total Sales (Median)	\$ 20,000	\$ 14,500
Farm Income (Median)	\$ 10,000	\$ 8,530
Household Income (Median)	\$ 50,000	\$ 40,080
Household Assets (Net)	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000
Debt	\$ 165,743	\$ 286,394

A recent survey conducted by the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association Inc in conjunction with the UW- Extension, was published. Fifty percent of more of respondents, primarily females in households earning \$50,000.00 or more per year indicated that supporting local farmers, spending time with family and friends, participating in outdoor or rural and affordable activities, and having a fun adventure were important reasons for participating in an agritourism activity. Having on-site restrooms, adequate parking and a convenient location made the list of the top three amenities looked for.⁶³ Examples of agritourism in and near Sauk County include, but are not limited to:

⁶¹ USDA 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2007 Agriculture Censuses

⁶² Agritourism in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Farm Research Summary, No. 8, Oct. 2006, Program on Agricultural Technology Studies

⁶³ 2012 Wisconsin Agritourism Survey Report, Laura Brown and Colette Hershey. UW Extension Center for Community & Economic Development

- Corn mazes
- Cheese factory tours
- Christmas tree farms
- Food festivals
- Pick-your-own produce farms
- Nurseries
- Wineries
- Sleigh or Horse rides
- Farm markets
- Bed and breakfast/farm stays
- Petting farms
- Farm tours
- Roadside produce stands
- Greenhouses
- Haunted barns
- Pumpkin patches

DATCP FINAL



Chapter 3: Sauk County Farmland Preservation Themes and Key Issues, Goals and Objectives

As part of the Farmland Preservation Plan development process, members of the Sauk County agriculture community contributed their expertise and ideas regarding trends, themes and key issues relating to agriculture businesses and farmland preservation.

An underlying theme in most conversations was the understanding that economical, quality food is paramount to any thriving society. The preservation of agriculture is vital to maintaining and increasing the quality of life for society. Within those expressions, the agriculture community also communicated a sense of pride; pride in the diversity of goods produced and their availability in Sauk County; excitement regarding the utilization of new technologies from GPS systems to higher yielding seeds; pride in land stewardship practices and resource conservation efforts; pride in knowledge and expertise; pride in the professionalism of the industry; pride in meeting local and global market needs and demands.

This chapter outlines all themes and associated key issue statements expressed during the planning process. Themes are assets, opportunities, or challenges. The key issues statements are general statements which highlight the assets, opportunities or challenges.

After each theme and key issue statement, a goal and one or more objectives/policies are listed. Goals are broad, advisory statements which convey what ultimately is to be achieved relating to a theme and/or key issue statement. Goals answer “What can, or should, Sauk County work towards?” An objective or policy states how Sauk County can and should work towards a goal. Objectives and policies are measurable, either qualitatively, quantitatively, or both.

Theme: Quality of life

Key Issue Statement:

1) Economical quality food is paramount to any thriving society. The preservation of agriculture is key to maintaining and increasing the quality of life for society.

Goal: Agricultural development, recognition and success needs to be a permanent part of our policies.

Objectives and Policies:

- 1) Recognizing that agricultural lands are a nonrenewable resource, Sauk County should work toward maximizing agriculture production capabilities while managing for growth, by developing a comprehensive approach to grade and protect our agriculture lands.
- 2) Develop programs to attract and encourage new agricultural development and markets to improve agriculture economic viability.
- 3) Encourage and support a variety of opportunities for positive interactive connections with the agriculture community.
- 4) Continue to consider both the long- and short-term goals when making decisions and to be aware of the long term implications of those decisions that affect the agriculture industry.



Theme: The Economics of Farming

Key Issue Statements:

- 1) Farming operations are becoming more efficient and producing higher yields in part due to utilization of advances in technology.
- 2) Opportunities are available to increase local, regional, and global demands of diverse and quality products.
- 3) The higher costs of land, volatile production expenses and commodity prices, and securing capital for startup and transition of farming operations is limiting growth potential.
- 4) Government programs can provide economic and technical assistance to producers.



5) Understanding of federal fiscal policy is essential for agriculture business planning.

Goal: Create a framework that will allow for the success of various types of agricultural operations and support industries.

Objectives and Policies:

- 1) Encourage entrepreneurship and economic development with a focus on utilizing existing and emerging technology and products.
- 2) Encourage adaptability, innovation and for-organization-association as a means of improving the economics in farming.
- 3) Collaborate with regional partners to enhance opportunities for producers and food processors to take advantage of market demands and emerging markets.
- 4) Support agriculture producers, operators and businesses in business plan development as one means to ensure operations are viable.
- 5) Develop and support strategies that help recognize that there is a difference between the production value and perceived sale value of agriculture lands.
- 6) Develop programs and provide assistance to viable innovative, modernizing, start-up and transition farming operations.
- 7) Continue to develop programs and infrastructure which allow for different operations to thrive and meet local and regional market demands.
- 8) Support the agricultural land use property tax.
- 9) Support education regarding economic policies, the value of our currency, and legislation initiatives at national and global level.

Theme: Agriculture Policy Development

Key Issue Statements:

- 1) Non-agriculture related development continues to challenge farm land preservation and the right to farm.
- 2) The State of Wisconsin and Sauk County are committed to helping preserve agriculture resources through a variety of programs and policies.
- 3) Viable and reliable transportation networks are crucial in keeping the flow of goods and equipment to and from operations.



Goal: Balance the development of non-agricultural land use with agricultural land preservation and the right to farm.

Objectives and Policies:

- 1) Facilitate the creation of boundary and extra territorial agreements that support orderly development and preserve agriculture businesses and lands.
- 2) Work with interested towns to expand farmland preservation options through the application of Exclusive Agriculture zoning.
- 3) Continue to improve methods to help agriculture related businesses, producers and landowners understand the policy and permit processes with an emphasis on facilitating movement through county, state, and federal processes.
- 4) Continue to provide Agriculture Enterprise Petition education and support for groups of interested landowners and/or towns.
- 5) Continue to evaluate farmland preservation programs to ensure their effectiveness.
- 6) Continue to listen to the concerns and comments of the agricultural community and be a liaison to state policy makers regarding maintaining a successful farmland preservation program.
- 7) Advocate to state policy makers and DATCP to maintain programs that preserve farmland in Sauk County including the Planned Rural Development program.
- 8) Support policies and programs which create catastrophic insurance programs for risk management to replace price supports and thus support a natural process of supply and demand.

9) Continue to work with the state and federal governments to maintain and improve physical infrastructure and transportation

Theme: Operational Assets and Resources

Key Issue Statements:

1) Research and technological advances play a significant role in the agriculture community by contributing to increased production, access to relevant information, as well as more efficient operations.

2) Agriculture experience, education and business training are essential components for production agriculture to function as a professional, efficient, and competitive operation.

3) Availability of a reliable and well trained work force provides for the maintenance and growth of agricultural operations.

Goal: Cultivate agriculture as a career objective and foster continuing educational development.

Objectives and Policies:

1) Support incentives to apply new technologies in existing and future agricultural operations and create educational settings to understand their applications.

2) Identify and utilize methods and programs to effectively and efficiently inform farmers of trends, advances in technology and resources.

3) Partner with agriculture organizations to provide and promote employer/employment standards.

4) Sponsor and support programs which expose young people and those making a career change to the expanding possibilities in agriculture and agriculture related businesses.

5) Support programs which provide training opportunities for agricultural employees.



Theme: Agricultural Education and Information Exchange

Key Issue Statement:

Our agriculture success is dependent on information exchange. That exchange of information plays a significant role in education, awareness, consumer demand, public perception, land stewardship and resource conservation needs, as well as interagency cooperative efforts.



Goal: Develop and maintain centralized access to information.

Objectives and Policies:

- 1) Implement methods to increase rural access to current communication technologies.
- 2) Create and support programs that inform the public of new agricultural products and those that promote awareness of conservation, farm development success stories, good farming practices, right to farm and rural living responsibilities.
- 3) Support training for agriculture producers, operators and businesses regarding effective public relations and marketing methods.
- 4) Explore opportunities to support community, regional, and global agriculture information and education exchanges.
- 5) Pursue programs to educate the public on why preserving agricultural land is important, including food production, wildlife habitat, and economic importance to community.

Theme: Natural Resources Conservation and Management

Key Issue Statements:

- 1) Technology advancements, effective waste management, conservation and sustainable practices are essential to maintaining healthy soil, water and other natural resources while producing quality foods.
- 2) Climate variability is creating risks to production and profitability.



3) Profitable operations are key to sustainable management of natural resources.

Goal: Proactively address changing natural resource management needs.

Objectives and Policies:

1) Partner with other agencies to develop, support and evaluate agriculture best management practices and programs that balance practicality with effectiveness.

2) Continue to develop and support policies which allow for diversified production methods which promote adaptability to climate variations and resource conservation needs.

3) Work with producers to identify the most profitable and sustainable production system for them.

4) Partner with landowners and provide technical assistance to help landowners meet soil and water conservation standards and protect groundwater resources.

Theme: Types of Agriculture Operations

Key Issue Statement: Sauk County’s agricultural businesses must remain diverse to take advantage of market needs.

Goal: Support and encourage all types of agriculture.



Objectives and Policies:

1) Promote policies and programs which take advantage of the potential diversity of local food systems and agricultural products of Sauk County.





Chapter 4 Farmland Preservation Maps

In 2013, each town in Sauk County reviewed and where appropriate updated their Farmland Preservation Map. The towns reviewed their farmland preservation map, current zoning map and future land use maps for consistency. When designating farmland preservation, development and transition areas on the farmland preservation map, the following criteria was utilized:

Farmland Preservation Mapping Criteria

Parcels which fit within any of the criteria listed below, and which are not a part of a City, Village or unincorporated development area or fifteen year planned development area, are designated as a preservation area:

- Primarily devoted to agriculture or agricultural related uses
- Open space
- Grassland
- Forest
- Natural resource area
- Open waters
- Wetlands
- Land within the Baraboo Range Protection area as identified in February, 2013
- Land designated as an Agriculture Enterprise Area as of February, 2013

Unincorporated Development Areas Mapping Criteria

The following criteria were utilized for the designation of the unincorporated development areas:

- Unincorporated villages or hamlets
- Areas of rural, non-agriculture related development such as rural business development and rural neighborhoods

Transition Areas Mapping Criteria

Transition Areas are those areas designated as non-agricultural development within the next fifteen years. These areas are:

- Parcels identified through either a boundary agreement, extraterritorial zoning district or a memorandum of understanding as an area which may be annexed and/or developed within the next fifteen years
- Parcels identified by town zoning or future land use maps as a development area

Federal, State and County Owned Land Mapping Criteria

All lands owned by a federal, state or county entity are considered unclassified and are not farmland preservation, unincorporated development, or transitions areas.

The following pages contain the Farmland Preservation Plan Maps for each Town, except the Towns of Washington and Winfield, in alphabetical order.