

# CONSERVATION CHRONICLE

Newsletter of the Land Resources and Environment Department



*To conserve natural, cultural, and community resources by promoting, planning, and implementing efficient and effective programs.*

Volume 37

Number 2

September 2022

## Updates from the Sauk County Farm

In March 2022, the Sauk County Board of Supervisors adopted a property master plan to transform the Sauk County Farm into a community agricultural education center. Over the next 20 years, the Land Resources and Environment Department envisions the County Farm becoming an important educational resource for Sauk County Residents of all ages and backgrounds to learn and research regenerative, profitable, and resilient agricultural practices through on-site demonstration, research, and collaborative partnerships.

The County is now accepting proposals for conducting agricultural demonstrations and research at the Sauk County Farm. Two crop fields, totaling approximately 17 acres, have been designated as demonstration plots on the Sauk County Farm. The proposed project period will be 2 years beginning January 1, 2023, and may be extended an additional 3 years. The group shall propose conducting research projects on the fields that will explore regenerative and conservation-friendly farming best management practices.



*Looking out across pastures managed with rotational grazing at the Sauk County Farm.*

The County is also accepting bids for the following leases:

- Sauk County Farm cropland - approximately 220 acres
- Sauk County Farm pasture - approximately 60 acres
- Sauk County Health Care Center cropland - approximately 12 acres

Leases will run from January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2027. Bidders must provide a summary describing their experience utilizing conservation practices outlined in the lease agreement and follow a nutrient management plan. Bidders must also have access to technology that will be used to document planting and harvesting data.

Bid ad proposal information packets are available at the Land Resources and Environment Department or on the County Bids and Contract Information page at: [www.co.sauk.wi.us/rfps](http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/rfps). The County will accept bids and proposals until 4:30 PM, October 14, 2022 (CST).



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# Employing Nature

With input costs rising, and good labor hard to find, have you thought about letting nature work for you? Nature does not go on vacation, nature does not need to be paid, and yet, nature will show up day after day to work for you. By implementing the 5 principles of soil health, 1) Soil Armor; 2) Minimizing Soil Disturbance; 3) Plant Diversity; 4) Continuous Living Plant Roots, and 5) Livestock Integration, nature will reduce your input cost and increase profitability. Two simple ways to get started are to add no-till and cover crops to your operation.

If we treat the soil as an ecosystem and minimize soil disturbance by no-tilling, your soils will naturally become more resilient to wet and dry conditions, erosion will be reduced and, soil biological activity and soil organic matter will be increased when compared to conventionally tilled fields. These natural benefits can lead to additional economic gains for farmers over time. According to the USDA, conventional farmers who run a 4-pass system (fall chisel plow, spring disking, field cultivation, planter) use on average just over 6 gallons of fuel per acre per pass. Let's assume an average off-road diesel fuel price of \$4.00 per gallon. If a farmer farming 500 acres of crops switches from a conventional 4-pass tillage system to a 1-pass no-till, they could save 9,000 gallons of diesel fuel – more than \$36,000 worth – each year. A farmer who plows 15 acres per hour, for instance, would save roughly 33 hours of work with each eliminated pass over 500 acres by adopting no-till. That's an additional several thousand dollars saved each year.

Adding cover crops to your operation to armor the soil, increase diversity, and have a continual live plant root; the soil biological activity and soil organic matter will increase on your land. Making nature the employee of the month. Every business-savvy farmer knows that some purchases cannot be evaluated solely on their first-year financial impact. Applying lime to acidic soils is one example of a purchase that comes with a longer pay-back period. Similarly, cover crops gradually improve soil health and the productivity of fields, their economic value is best understood over a multi-year period. Cover crops can pay their way more quickly when the following factors are in place: herbicide-resistant weeds are a problem, cover crops are grazed, soil compaction is an issue, used to speed up and ease the transition to no-till, soil moisture is low or irrigation is needed, fertilizer costs are high or manure nutrients need to be sequestered, and incentive payments are received for using cover crops.

**TABLE 4. Impact of cover crops on costs, returns and net profit for corn following one, three and five years of cover crop use and with various management scenarios**

BUDGET ITEM	YEARS OF COVER CROPPING		
	One	Three	Five
All figures are per acre			
Estimated input savings when using cover crops			
Fertilizer <sup>1</sup>	\$0	\$14.10	\$21.90
Weed control <sup>2</sup>	\$0–\$15	\$10–\$25	\$10–\$25
Erosion repair <sup>3</sup>	\$2–\$4	\$2–\$4	\$2–\$4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2–\$19</b>	<b>\$26.10–\$43.10</b>	<b>\$33.90–\$50.90</b>
a. Savings on inputs (the low end of the subtotal range from above)	\$2	\$26.10	\$33.90
b. Income from extra yield in normal weather year (survey data) <sup>4</sup>	\$3.64	\$12.32	\$21
c. Cost of seed and seeding (survey data) <sup>5</sup>	\$37	\$37	\$37
<b>Net return in a normal weather year (a + b - c)</b>	<b>-\$31.36</b>	<b>\$1.42</b>	<b>\$17.90</b>
<i>SARE Technical Bulletin "Cover Crop Economics: Opportunities to Improve Your Bottom Line in Row Crops"</i>			

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) has compiled research on the impact of cover crops on costs, returns, and net profit for corn and soybeans following one, three and five years of cover crop use and with various management scenarios.

(continued on next page)



Three key takeaways on cover crop economics through SARE's analysis:

- 1.) When evaluating cover crop economics, farmers typically look at multi-year periods of using cover crops. Farmers who are most satisfied with their return on investment take a holistic look at how they manage their overall cropping system rather than altering just one practice (such as planting a cover crop).
- 2.) While an economic return can come relatively quick in certain situations, such as when using cover crops for grazing or to control herbicide-resistant weeds, the maximum return will build steadily over several years as the soil improves and as the farmer gains experience incorporating cover crops into their overall system.
- 3.) One of the most-often-cited economic benefits of cover crops by experienced users is their impact on the resiliency of the cropping system. Farmers are finding that by minimizing drought-related yield losses or sometimes allowing earlier planting in a wet spring, cover crops serve as a type of crop insurance.

Please contact our office to find out about incentives to employ natural ways to increase your farm profitability and improve soil and water quality.

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## *Make Plans to Check Out the 2023 Tree Sale*

The annual Sauk County Tree Sale was moved to an online storefront in 2022 and we couldn't be happier with the results. The ordering process was streamlined, and communication was simplified. We look forward to offering the sale online again in 2023. New species being offered in 2023 include Nannyberry, Black Chokeberry, and Button Bush. A couple favorite species returning that were not available in 2022 are Paper Birch and Tamarack. Visit: <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/cpz/tree-sale-program> after November 1<sup>st</sup> to find out how to place your order.

Due to increased product and shipping costs, tree bundles will cost \$26.00 each. We will be purchasing larger seedlings to help ensure a quality product is being delivered.

If you placed an order in 2022, you have been added to our customer list and will be notified when the online storefront goes live on November 1<sup>st</sup>. If you would like to be added to the customer email list or have any other questions about the tree sale, please feel free to contact Melissa Schlupp at (608) 355-4838 or [melissa.schlupp@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:melissa.schlupp@saukcountywi.gov)

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## *Adventure Awaits at White Mound County Park*

Get out and enjoy Sauk County's largest park, White Mound County Park! You can get a beautiful preview of the park by checking out the new Discover Wisconsin Episode featuring this scenic park: <https://discoverwisconsin.com/blog/videos/sauk-county-white-mound-county-park/>

There is so much to enjoy across the 1,100 acres of the park including miles of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling, and the 104-acre White Mound Lake where park goers can enjoy paddleboarding, canoeing, swimming, fishing, and boating at slow-no-wake speed.

The park also features equestrian trails for those who would like to bring their horses. Staff are currently working with a design and engineering company for the equestrian campground improvements. Equestrian users are encouraged to contact Jekka Alt at (608)355-4800 to share their thoughts as we navigate through this project. The trails are still open - come on out and ride!



*Horses at the equestrian campground at White Mound County Park.*

Plan your visit and learn more about the park and all that it has to offer by visiting the website: <https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/parksandrecreation/white-mound-county-park>.

## Nutrient Management Courses

Sauk County will be offering classes for producers who want to become qualified to write their own nutrient management plan. This class is designed to provide farmers with a broad understanding of nutrient management regulations, water quality concerns, and the financial benefits of managing farm nutrients.

The full two-day Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) program will be held on Wednesday, December 21 and Thursday, December 22. Participants must attend both days.

A one-day refresher course for people who have previously taken the full NMFE program will be held on Wednesday, January 11.

Classes will all be held at the Reedsburg Madison College Campus from 10 AM until 3 PM. Classes are FREE, however space is limited and participants must register by December 9. To register for Sauk County NMFE classes, please contact Brian Sadler at (608) 355-4841 or email [brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov).

## Sauk County Hazardous Waste Voucher Program: Clean Sweep Alternative

Sauk County and Dane County are working together to provide Sauk County residents the opportunity to dispose of their household hazardous waste at the Dane County Clean Sweep facility through a new voucher program. Sauk County residents who would like to participate in this program should come to the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department, located in the West Square Building at 505 Broadway Street, Ste 248, Baraboo, to complete a voucher form to utilize the Dane County Clean Sweep facility to dispose of their household hazardous waste. Please be sure to bring all materials when applying for the voucher program. All materials for disposal through the voucher program need to be approved by LRE staff. Once participants receive the approved voucher from Sauk County, they are then able to attend the Dane County Clean Sweep facility. Participants with the Sauk County voucher are required to pay a \$10.00 fee upon arrival at the Dane County Clean Sweep instead of the \$75.00 fee for out-of-county participants.

Sauk County residents are limited to one voucher per household per year and must use their voucher within 30 days of approval by the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department. This voucher program is for household hazardous wastes only. Any businesses, including agricultural businesses, will be classified as very small quantity generators (VSQGs) and will need to contact Dane County Clean Sweep to register and set up an appointment. For any VSQGs, there is a per-pound charge.



**Latex paint and motor oil are not accepted with this voucher program.** Latex paint is non-hazardous, but it must be solidified before throwing away. It's easy to dry out. If you have a small amount, simply remove the lid and allow it to dry outside. Mix larger amounts with cat litter or a paint drying product sold at hardware stores. Never dispose of liquid paint in your trash.

Used motor oil may be taken to the Sauk County Highway shop during their drop-off hours, Monday–Thursday from 8:00 am–3:00 pm. Please note that only clean waste oil will be accepted. No anti-freeze, gasoline, or any contaminated oil will be accepted. For more information, please contact the Highway Shop at (608) 355-4856.

To prepare for your Dane County Clean Sweep facility visit, please make sure to package any materials in boxes or rigid totes to keep products upright and prevent spills, keep materials in their original containers, and do not mix materials or co-mingle your waste in plastic bags.

For more information regarding the Sauk County voucher program or the Sauk Clean Sweep Program, please contact the Land Resources and Environment Department at (608) 355-3245 or email [conservation@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:conservation@saukcountywi.gov). You can also visit [www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation](http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation) for a more complete list of accepted items and alternative disposal options.

# Sauk County Clean Sweep

Saturday, September 24, 2022 from 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Old Sauk County Landfill  
E8795 Evergreen Lane, Baraboo



## Dispose of household hazardous waste safely.

Items accepted for **no charge** include: pesticides, cleaners, oil-based paint, batteries, light bulbs, and a wide variety of electronics.

For more information call 608-355-3245 or email [conservation@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:conservation@saukcountywi.gov)

*If you are or recently were ill, please stay home.*

*Stay in your vehicle at all times while at Clean Sweep. Event staff will unload items at each station.*

*In an effort to minimize close contact, items located in the cab or passenger seats of vehicles will not be accepted. Please make sure ALL items are loaded in the rear of vehicle, trunk, truck bed, or trailer to be unloaded by the event staff.*

*ALL electronic items need to be cleaned/wiped down before they are brought to the event, electronic items that are not cleaned/wiped down may not be accepted.*



**Latex paint is not accepted at Sauk County Clean Sweep events.**



### Fees for Tires

Car and light truck tires	\$6
Car and light truck w/rims	\$8
Ag and Semi tires	\$13
Ag and Semi tires w/ rims	\$25
<13" tires	\$2
<13" w/rims	\$4

**Payment for tires can be made in CASH or CHECK payable to Sauk County Treasurer.**

### What is NOT ACCEPTED:

- Latex Paint
- Pharmaceuticals, IVs, needles
- Explosives, detonators, blasting caps
- Radioactive materials including smoke alarms
- Infectious and biological waste
- Compressed gas cylinders
- Recyclables, yard and household waste
- Asbestos
- Demolition Materials
- Mattresses

Small businesses **MUST pre-register for Paint & Chemicals with Veolia at least 1 week prior.**  
Please contact Zach Davis at (262) 253-3504.

Agricultural producers should contact Sauk County directly at (608) 355-4842.

No Late registration will be accepted

Resource Solutions will accept the following items at Clean Sweep:

\*Please remove all batteries from electronics\*

**No Charge:** CPUs, Computer Printers, Speakers, Scanners, Fax Machines, Vacuum Cleaners, Phones, Laptops, Record Players, Tape Players, CD Players, iPods, VCRs, DVD Players, Beta Tape Players, Electric Saws, Drills, Calculators, Paper Shredders, Coffee Machines, Heaters, Game Systems, Sewing Machines, Electronic Toys, Most Household electrical items.

10 - Hard Drive Removal and Destruction  
\$15 - Microwaves & Large Copy Machines  
\$20 - Small AC Units, mini fridges, dehumidifiers  
\$25 - Stoves, washers, dryers, dishwashers, treadmills, lawn mowers (oil/gas drained, tires removed)  
\$35 - Refrigerators & Large Freezers  
\$20 - All monitors, CRT & Flat Screen  
\$20 - CRT/Flat Screen TVs 29" and under  
\$40 - CRT/Flat Screen TVs 30"-49"  
\$60 - CRT/Flat Screen TVs 50" and up, projection, wooden console

**Payment for electronics can be made in CASH, CREDIT, or CHECK payable to Resource Solutions at the event.**

**Contact Resource Solutions at (608) 244-5451 regarding electronic items not included on the list above.**



## Learn About Your Land - Classes for Woodland Owners

The University of Wisconsin Madison Division of Extension Forestry in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry is hosting introductory classes for private landowners online in September and October. This series of three online classes held via Zoom on Thursday nights beginning on September 29th from 6:30 - 7:00 pm will cover topics such as timber sales, forestry management programs and assistance, and tree planting. The registration fee is \$15.00 per person and includes all three webinars. Space is limited and pre-registration by September 26 is required. To register, visit <https://woodlandinfo.org/register/>. If you have any questions, please contact Tony Johnson, Extension Natural Resource Educator at [Anthony.johnson@wisc.edu](mailto:Anthony.johnson@wisc.edu) or call (608) 386-8900.



## 2023 Conserve Sauk Film Festival Call For Entries

The next Conserve Sauk Film Festival will be held in November of 2023 and the organizers of the festival are looking for films to include in the official lineup for the 2023 festival. Help bring awareness to important conservation topics by submitting a film or creating a film for the 2023 Conserve Sauk Film Festival.

Films submitted for the 2023 festival should address one of the following topic areas such as agriculture, geology, forestry, land use, wildlife, water, recreation, human-nature experience, and conservation history. Films should address an issue, challenge, best management practice, important resource, significant history, or historical figure associated either directly or indirectly, with the environment of Sauk County. Films that meet these requirements can be submitted for review by the steering committee to be included in the official 2023 festival lineup. Please submit films no later than 11:59 PM (CDT) on Saturday, April 1, 2023, via Film Freeway [www.filmfreeway.com/ConserveSaukFilmFestival](http://www.filmfreeway.com/ConserveSaukFilmFestival) or email Justine Bula at [justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov). There will not be any film contest for 2023 and no cash prizes or awards will be given out. Recognition for participation as an official selection of the festival will be provided and participants will be invited to attend and speak at their film's screening.

The Conserve Sauk Film Festival is an event created to highlight, celebrate, and promote the creation of environmentally-themed films that relate directly or indirectly to Sauk County and its residents. The festival offers an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the natural beauty and resources of the area, celebrate our conservation successes, reflect upon our relationship to the environment, address challenges that we face, consider how we can be part of the solution, and connect as a county and a community over our shared world. We hope to inspire creative thought, discussion, and potential solutions to these challenges by coming together through this project.

This project began in 2019 and is a collaborative effort between the Carnegie-Schadde Memorial Public Library, the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department, UW-Platteville Baraboo Sauk County, the Sauk County Conservation Network, the International Crane Foundation, and the Nature Conservancy.

The 2023 Conserve Sauk Film Festival will be free and open to the public. Screenings of films will be followed by facilitated discussions on the topics and themes presented in the films, led by local experts. For more information about the Conserve Sauk Film Festival, visit the event website at [www.conservesaukfilmfest.org](http://www.conservesaukfilmfest.org)

### Read Your Newsletter Online!

Would you prefer to read the Conservation Chronicle online? Please e-mail [conservation@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:conservation@saukcountywi.gov) if you would like to receive an email notifying you when the newsletter is available for viewing on our website at: [www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation](http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation). This will help us reduce postage costs as well as paper. If you know of someone who would enjoy receiving this newsletter, please let us know!

### We're on Facebook



Follow us on Facebook and stay up-to-date on events, deadlines, articles, videos, and more!

Search @sauk.lre then "like"

# Upcoming Events

## Pasture Walks

- **Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm:** Hosted by the [Savanna Institute](#) at 6511 Hillside School Rd, Spring Green, WI. We will branch out to learn more about Silvopasture and how to manage animals, trees, and forages across the landscape.
- **Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm:** Hosted by Roger Bindl, at S10620 Weidner Rd, Spring Green. This pasture walk will be focused on grazing cover crops and will showcase information collected as part of an ongoing research project with the [Sand County Foundation](#) and four graziers from [SSWIG](#).

Pasture walk events are free and open to the public unless otherwise posted. Please contact Serge Koenig at (608) 355-4837 or [serge.koenig@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:serge.koenig@saukcountywi.gov) for more information on the pasture walk programs or if you are interested in learning more about rotational grazing for your farm.



*Pasture walk attendees learn from Serge Koenig, Greg Judy, and Darren Yanke at the May 21, 2022 Greg Judy Grazing School.*

## Soil Health Winter Workshop - David Brandt

Mark your calendars for the next Soil Health Winter Workshop! The Sauk Soil and Water Improvement Group (SSWIG), will be co-hosting this workshop featuring keynote speaker David Brandt on Tuesday, February 7, 2023. More details on the workshop will be available closer to the date. Contact Justine Bula at (608) 355-4842 or email [justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov) for more information.

## The Aldo Leopold Foundation



Kei Kohmoto

*"The Shack" at Aldo Leopold Foundation.  
Photo by Kei Kohmoto.*

Save the date for the first annual **Great Midwest Crane Fest – Celebrating Community and Conservation in Baraboo, Wisconsin**, from November 10 to 12, 2022, as thousands of Sandhill Cranes gather near the Wisconsin River before flying south for the winter. Witness the marvel of Wisconsin's largest crane congregation and participate in guided crane-viewing tours, photography and crane behavior workshops, conservation-related lectures, and extraordinary events. Explore the beautiful landscapes and rich histories connecting the festival hosts, the International Crane Foundation, and the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

Visit [greatmidwestcranefest.org](http://greatmidwestcranefest.org) to register and for more information.

### **Open Shack Fridays**

***We have added a new way to connect with the***

***Shack in 2022!*** Enjoy the self-guided tour experience with a twist. The Shack is open and ready for you to explore from 1:00-4:00 on Fridays through October. Get to know the Leopold Shack and surrounding landscapes through our guide's unique perspectives. Visitors can use our self-guided tour brochure to meander amongst the historic landscape. *Please check in at the Leopold Center to buy tickets, and to receive your tour brochure.*

**Open House Dates:** Fridays, May-October

**Open House Fees:** \$7 per person. Tours are free for children aged 10 and younger.

Visit [aldoleopold.org/visit](http://aldoleopold.org/visit) to explore additional tour opportunities.

THE ALDO  
LEOPOLD  
FOUNDATION




Sauk County LRE  
505 Broadway, Ste. 248  
Baraboo, WI 53913  
www.co.sauk.wi.us  
conservation@saukcountywi.gov

Nonprofit Org  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Baraboo, WI 53913  
Permit No. 105

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LRE..... (608) 355-3245  
NRCS..... (608) 355-4420, ext. 3  
FSA..... (608) 355-4420, ext. 2  
DNR Foresters ..... (608) 235-5685  
APHIS (WDS) ..... (608) 837-2727  
1-866-487-3297

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## Lake Shoreline Erosion



Example of vegetated rock riprap along shoreline of lake.

Lakeshore erosion can be caused by several different reasons, from natural processes to human disturbances. It can be localized or widespread and may be the result of more than one factor. The natural energy of waves, currents, and ice move soil particles, causing erosion and soil displacement. Human disturbances can include powerboat wakes, vegetation removal, foot traffic, dredging, filling, or construction along the shoreline. Understanding these impacts will better help you contextualize your shoreline and how to be a better steward of your property along a lake.

There are other great resources to learn more about shoreline stabilization available. Check out the [\*Shoreline Stabilization: A Guide for Homeowners and Conservationists on Inland Lakes and Flowages\*](#) produced by the Wisconsin Shoreland Stabilization Outreach Project with assistance from the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation

Association. You can view the full publication on our website at: [www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation/lake-shore-assistance-program](http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/landconservation/lake-shore-assistance-program)

Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department is accepting applications for lakeshore protection projects. Cost-share funding is limited to 50% of the project cost up to \$2,500. Eligible projects will be practices that reduce sediment loads that cause degradation of habitat and water quality of lakes in Sauk County. These projects may include but are not limited to vegetated buffers, bioengineering with natural fiber products, wave-reducing natural timbers, and rock riprap with bioengineering techniques. LRE staff will provide technical assistance in installing these practices. The deadline to apply is November 1, 2022.

Contact Mitchell McCarthy, Sauk County Watershed Coordinator, to get your shoreline assessed and ask about potential cost-share assistance to protect your shoreline. Email: [mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov) or call (608) 477-3192.