

# 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.*

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## ***Grow Solar Sauk County Program Returns to Soak Up More Sun This Summer***

The sun is shining for homeowners and business owners throughout Sauk County, as the *Grow Solar Sauk County* ([www.growsolar.org/sauk-co](http://www.growsolar.org/sauk-co)) program commences this spring. The program will allow individual home and commercial property owners to access competitive prices for solar installations through the power of volume purchasing.



Grow Solar builds on the success of a similar program in 2018, when over 65 home and small business owners installed solar around the county. The program surpassed its goal of adding 200 kilowatts (kW) of solar more than twice over. The program achieved a total capacity of over 430 kW.

One of the participants from the 2018 program, David Kell, explains why he and his wife, Barbra, took the solar plunge: “We wanted to decrease our carbon footprint and use less energy from the electric company... Our payback will be 10 years. But financial savings is not the main reason to install solar panels. Our main concern is to do all we can in our household to reduce carbon in the atmosphere.”

Grow Solar Sauk County allows individual home, farm, and commercial property owners to access lower prices for solar installations through the power of volume purchasing. As such, at each interval of 50, 150, 250 and 350 kW of solar capacity that the program participants collectively achieve, the price of solar is reduced.

Between April and August, the Midwest Renewable Energy Association will provide free, public, one-hour long educational sessions called Solar Power Hours via webinar for prospective participants to learn how solar energy works and to answer questions. The program’s website, [www.growsolar.org/sauk-co](http://www.growsolar.org/sauk-co), includes a sign up form that area residents can fill out for an estimate, or to receive general program updates and Solar Power Hour announcements. The full calendar is available at [sauk.growsolar.org](http://sauk.growsolar.org), and the first few presentations are as follows:

- Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 PM
- Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM
- Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM

In total the solar arrays from the 2018 effort produced approximately 490,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) in their first year of operation, saving the average participating property owner \$1,042 on electricity bills in the first year alone. The environmental benefits are significant as well, avoiding a total of over 399,000 lbs. of coal burning in their first year of operation.

The program is administered by the MREA at no cost the County, and is supported by Sauk County Land Resources and Environment, UW-Madison Extension, One Heart Inc., and Powered Up Baraboo.

The MREA was incorporated as a 501 (c)3 nonprofit shortly after the first [Energy Fair](#) in 1990. MREA’s mission is to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living through education and demonstration. To learn more, call 715-592-6595 or visit [www.midwestrenew.org](http://www.midwestrenew.org).

### CONTENTS

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Sauk County Pollinator Program .....       | page 2 |
| Sauk County Institute of Leadership .....  | page 2 |
| Sauk County Poster Contest .....           | page 3 |
| USDA FSA News .....                        | page 4 |
| Farmland Preservation Incentive .....      | page 4 |
| Sauk County Clean Sweep .....              | page 5 |
| Shoreland Protection Assistance .....      | page 6 |
| Assistance is Only a Phone Call Away ..... | page 6 |
| Read Your Newsletter Online .....          | page 6 |
| Sign Up for Conservation Programs .....    | page 7 |
| Upcoming LRE Events .....                  | page 7 |
| CREP .....                                 | page 8 |

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## ***Sauk County Pollinator Program***

Pollinators, such as birds, bats, bees, butterflies, and beetles are responsible for pollinating flowers in our backyard along with a number of fruits, vegetables, and nut crops. They are a critical part of our food system and are esthetically pleasing to view. Unfortunately, pollinator populations are in decline due to a number of reasons including loss of habitat, misuse of chemicals, disease, and climate change.



Bumble Bee on a sunflower in a cover crop field.

Land Resources and Environment staff are collaborating with Extension Sauk County and other conservation groups to protect pollinators in Sauk County. A number of useful topics and resources have been compiled on the Sauk County Pollinator Protection website: <https://sauk.extension.wisc.edu/community-development/pollinator-protection-resources/>. It is a one-stop shop for Sauk County residents who want to identify different pollinator species, assess, enhance or create pollinator habitat on their property or to find additional resources on pollinators.

LRE and Extension staff successfully secured funding through the Ho-Chunk Intergovernmental Grant Program to establish Pollinator Demonstration Gardens on 25 public properties in Sauk County. These pre-planned gardens with 32 plants will provide a variety of nectar and pollen resources throughout the blooming season. The gardens are scheduled to be planted in June 2021 and will be open to the public. Visit the Sauk County Pollinator Protection website for location information for each site.

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## ***Sauk County Institute of Leadership Program***

SCIL is taking applications for 2021-2022!! You can find additional information including an application form on our [website](#). In addition, please note applicants can save \$75 by applying before **June 1<sup>st</sup>** however the final deadline for all applications is **July 1<sup>st</sup>**.

SCIL has changed a lot over the years, but some things have stayed the same. SCIL is a leadership development program that empowers, engages, and equips participants to make a positive difference in Sauk County. The nine-month program kicks off with an overnight retreat in September followed by eight, daylong workshops that are held throughout the county on the second Thursday of each month from October to May. The program concludes with a celebration of leadership event in May.

Each interactive SCIL session blends leadership skill development with an examination of emerging community issues. While the SCIL sessions evolve each year, the leadership topics typically include personality assessments, team building, emotional intelligence, trust building, conflict management, networking, as well as presentations related to creating and managing change. Another key feature of the SCIL program is the self-directed leadership project. As part of the project SCIL participants apply their leadership skills and resourcefulness to develop and execute a project that benefits Sauk County.

Please contact [Ellen Klima](#) at the UW-Platteville Continuing Education Institute located on the Baraboo/Sauk County campus at (608) 355-5220 or [klimae@uwplatt.edu](mailto:klimae@uwplatt.edu)

Thank you for helping to keep the SCIL program strong and vibrant!

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**SCIL** SAUK COUNTY  
INSTITUTE OF LEADERSHIP

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# Sauk County 2021 NACD Poster Contest

Sixty three Sauk County students in grades K-12 created posters for the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Conservation Awareness Poster competition. The Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department sponsored the program locally, encouraging students to submit unique artwork to address this year's theme, "Healthy Forests = Healthy Communities".

The first place poster from each grade division moves on to regional, state, and national competitions. Students receive prizes and awards at each level in which their posters compete and win. Sauk County awarded a special prize for the classroom with the most student participation at the local level. This year our winners received an Amazon gift card, wildflower seeds, and custard coupons, generously donated by Culvers.



For grades K-1, Mackenna Herrild won first place. Mackenna's poster moved onto to compete at the Southern Area Regional Competition, where she won first place again! Mackenna's poster went all the way onto to compete at the Wisconsin State competition in March, where she won second place.



Awards for grades 2-3 went to Kallie Sadler, 1<sup>st</sup> Place; Alexandra Herrild, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place; and Beau Dixon, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. Judges also awarded honorable mentions to Harper McNurien and Cristal Torres Castillo. Kallie's poster moved onto to compete at the Southern Area Regional competition to win another first place award. Kallie's poster joined Mackenna Herrild's to compete in their respective grade division at the Wisconsin State competition, at the annual WI Land + Water Conference, where conservation employees from around the state vote on the top posters for each grade division. Kallie's poster placed third in the state for grades 2-3!

Award winners for grades 4-6 were Kessie Breitbach, 1<sup>st</sup> Place; Kelis Sibenaller, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place; and Molly Justus, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. Judges also awarded honorable mentions to Violet Fredrickson and Brooklyn Froesch. Kessie's poster went on to win a third place award at the Southern Area Regional Competition.

The winning posters for grades 7-9 were awarded to Sydney Cherney, 1<sup>st</sup> Place; and Mackenna Fry, 2<sup>nd</sup> place. With her first place poster, Sydney moved onto the Southern Area Regional Competition, receiving a second place award.

For the 10-12 grade division, the winning posters were awarded to Madeline Corbin, 1<sup>st</sup> Place; Brenna Lutter, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place; and Shailyn Schara, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. Madeline's first place poster went on to win second place at the Southern Area Regional Competition.

Congratulations to all of the students for their hard work and creativity! The judges were impressed with the level of creativity and thought that each student put into their poster.

To see the 2021 winning posters for Sauk County, visit our [website](#). For the results of the 2021 state competition, you can visit the [WI Land & Water](#) site for all the details.

Information and registration forms for the 2022 NACD Conservation Poster Contest will be made available on our website this fall. If you would like to participate or have any questions about this program, contact Justine Bula at (608) 355-4842 or [justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov).



1<sup>st</sup> place poster for grades 10-12 submitted by Madeline Corbin.

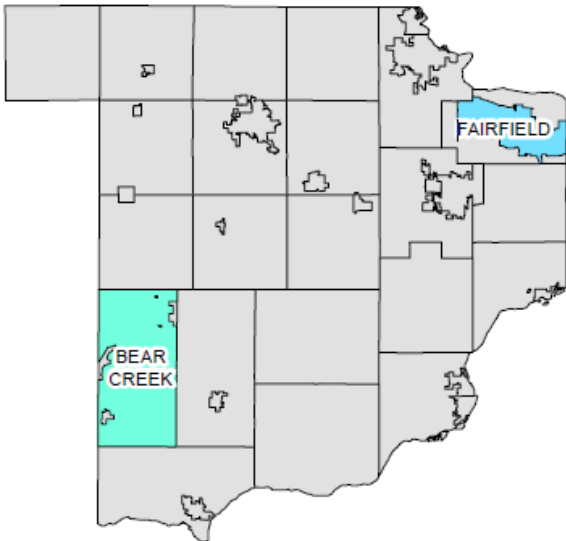
Maps are now available at the Sauk County FSA Office for acreage reporting purposes. If you wish to receive your maps by e-mail or wish to pick them up, please call our office at (608) 355-4420, ext. 2 or email at [fsa.baraboo@usda.gov](mailto:fsa.baraboo@usda.gov).

- July 15, 2020 - Crop and acreage reports are due for all spring seeded crops, forage seeding and perennial forage, and all CRP acreage. These reports are vital for establishing and maintaining eligibility for many USDA programs. In order to maintain program eligibility and benefits, producers must timely file acreage reports. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may result in ineligibility for future program benefits. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

Please contact the Sauk County FSA office to get your maps for recording and completing your acreage reports timely. Producers are encouraged to file their acreage reports as soon as planting is completed.

For more information, please contact the Sauk County FSA Office at (608) 355-4420, ext. 2.

## Farmland Preservation AEA Incentive Payments



An agricultural enterprise area (AEA) is an area of productive agricultural land that has received designation from the state at the request of landowners and local governments. As a part of the state's Farmland Preservation Program, AEAs strive to support local farmland protection goals. Sauk County has two recognized AEAs established in the townships of Fairfield (2012) and Bear Creek (2020). The farmland preservation program is a great tool for promoting best management practices that help protect soil and water resources while maintaining farmland productivity.

We are currently seeking landowners within these AEAs to support the protection of farmland by signing a Farmland Preservation Agreement. By doing so, they agree to stay in compliance with the current state conservation standards and in return, receive a **yearly tax credit of \$5/acre for the duration of their 15-year agreement. If a participant signs an agreement in 2021 they will also receive an incentive payment of \$2000-\$3000.**



### Agreements are signed for a variety of reasons:

- Claim the farmland preservation tax credit
- Meet conservation goals on a farm
- Protect land from non-agricultural related uses



#### **FARM TRACTS < 200 ACRES**

A one time incentive payment of **\$2,000** for each applicant with a 200 acre or less farm, once the agreement is recorded.

#### **FARM TRACTS > 200 ACRES**

A one time incentive payment of **\$3,000** for each applicant with a farm greater than 200 acres, once the agreement is recorded.

Limited funds available for incentive payments. Funds distributed on first come first served basis.  
Questions? Contact Brian Sadler with Sauk County LRE at (608) 355-4841 or [brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov)

# Sauk County Clean Sweep

Saturday, September 25, 2021 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.

\$1-\$10 - Battery Removal Fee

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.

# Cost Share Assistance to Help Protect Shorelines



Vegetated Rock Riprap along shoreline of lake.

The configurations of our lake shorelines in Wisconsin have been constantly changing over the last few thousand years. Soil erosion is a natural process that is part of that configuration. Unfortunately, when the rate of erosion speeds up due to loss of vegetation, physical disturbances, changes in water levels, or increases in wave action, the increased soil loss and removal of native vegetation is bad for the health of the lake. Soil eroding into the lake can reduce water quality, and increase the growth of algal blooms and aquatic plants. Eroding soil also has a damaging effect on fish and wildlife habitat. The negative effects of shoreline erosion are a concern for landowners who care about the health of their lake and their property.

Good news though, Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department is accepting applications for lake shore 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 (e.g. natural fiber rolls and logs, blocks, and mats), wave-reducing natural timbers (e.g. log and root wad revetment, fish sticks and tree drops), and rock riprap with bioengineering techniques (e.g. Rock riprap with native plantings, geotextile bags, and synthetic engineered matting). LRE staff will provide technical assistance installing these practices. Deadline to apply is June 24, 2021. Contact Mitch McCarthy for more information [mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov) or (608) 477-3192

## Assistance is Only a Phone Call Away!

Contact the LRE office at (608) 355-3245 if you are interested in any of the services listed:

- **Soil Health Assessment:** LRE staff are available to complete free soil health assessments on farms. Staff will determine how well your soil can absorb water, using compaction and infiltration tests. A slake test will also be completed to determine your soil's vulnerability to runoff and erosion.
- **Soil Sampling:** Soil samples will help you identify where lime applications should occur and is the basis for your nutrient management plan. Soil augers and soil sample bags are available at the LRE office.
- **Nutrient Management Plan Writing Assistance:** Our staff can help you write or update your nutrient management plan. If you have taken the NMFE class in the past, LRE staff can assist you with updating your nutrient management plan.
- **Manure Spreader Calibration:** If you spread manure and don't know your rate, staff from the LRE office can calibrate your spreader so you know what you're spreading.

## 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 at <https://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!

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Search @sauk.lre then "like"

# Sign Up Now for Conservation Programs

Most conservation programs are open for sign-up anytime throughout the year and there is no time like the present. Staff can help you determine which program best meets your needs. Applications are scored as they are received and funding is applied to the highest-ranking projects until funding runs out. Here are some of the available programs to consider:

- **Technical and Financial Assistance** is available to landowners to install conservation practices to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality and conserve the natural resources of Sauk County. If approved, landowners can receive up to 70% cost-sharing to install conservation practices including stream crossings, streambank stabilization, and grassed waterways.
- **Nutrient Management Program** assists landowners with the development of plans that address the proper application of fertilizers and animal waste to crop fields and pasture land. Eligible costs include soil sampling tests and plan development by a qualified consultant.
- **Baraboo River Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)** is a special pool of funding for the Baraboo River Watershed in Sauk and Juneau Counties. Technical and financial assistance is available to install conservation practices that prevent soil erosion and reduce agricultural runoff to ground and surface waters. Eligible practices include rotational grazing infrastructure, cover crops, and streambank stabilization.

Please call the LRE Department at (608) 355-3245 to discuss the conservation needs for your property.

## Upcoming Land Resource & Environment Events

### Pasture Walks

- **Thursday, May 27th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by Greg Brickner at S508 Co. Rd G, Wonewoc. Learn about grazing sheep, veterinary information and what a pasture looks like after a decade of good pasture management.
- **Thursday, June 24th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by B & B Goerks LLC at E11308 Goerks Rd, Baraboo. Learn more about dairy grazing at this pasture walk.
- **Wednesday, July 14th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by Echo-Y Farms at S7909 Skyview Rd, Loganville. The focus of this pasture walk will be on what to look for when finishing grass fed animals.
- **Wednesday, August 11th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by Gabe Bauer at E435 Co. Rd EE, Wonewoc. This event will focus on watering systems and will feature Nick Kinsman, a local plumber.
- **Wednesday, September 15th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by Bula's Pleasant Valley Farm located at S4473 Scenic Rd, Baraboo. Learn about how to train cows to eat thistle and other weeds as well as multi species grazing.
- **Wednesday, October 6th at 6:00 PM**, hosted by Dale Gasser at E7415 Spring Dr, Sauk City. This pasture walk will focus on cattle handling facilities along with reclaiming areas that were bale grazed with annuals and/or perennials.



Please contact Serge Koenig, 608-355-4837 or [serge.koenig@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:serge.koenig@saukcountywi.gov) for more information.

### Conservation Day by the Lake

The Sauk Soil & Water Improvement Group (SSWIG), will be co hosting a conservation workshop featuring presentations from guest speaker, Rick Clark along with breakout sessions on planting green, cover crops, low disturbance manure injector and grazing. A social hour will follow the event, beginning at 7:30 pm.

**When:** Saturday, June 19, 2021 from 2:00 - 7:30 PM

**Where:** N2007 East Harmon Rd, Lodi

**Cost:** \$20.00/person      \$30.00/person after June 10, 2021

**RSVP Deadline:** Thursday, June 10, 2021



Please contact Justine Bula, 608-355-4842 or [justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:justine.bula@saukcountywi.gov) for more information.

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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## ***Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)***

**C**REP pays landowners to install filter strips along waterways or to return continually flooded fields to wetlands while leaving the remainder of the adjacent land in agricultural production. Thousands of Wisconsin landowners have enrolled land in one of two enrollment options: 15-Year Agreement or Perpetual Easement. Currently, there are about 32 easements and 117 agreements enrolling 2,500+ acres into CREP in Sauk County.

### What land is eligible for CREP?

Eligible land must be located in one of about 50 designated CREP counties, have a history of crop or pasture land, and be located within 150 feet of a ditch, stream, lake, or wetland. The typical CREP site consists of buffers ranging from 30 to 150 feet wide along a stream.

### What are the eligible conservation practices?

There are many different conservation practice options through the CREP program. The practice installed on a property depends on both site factors and desires of the landowner. Conservation practices include filter strips, riparian buffers, grassed waterways, wetland restorations, marginal pastureland habitat buffers, permanent introduced grasses, permanent native grasses, grass prairie ecosystem restorations, and established legumes and grass.



For more information, please contact Serge Koenig at 608-355-4837 or serge.koenig@saukcountywi.gov.