

Land Resources and Environment Department: Monthly Report

Land Conservation

Highlights

- Staff assisted with the pasture walk at Narrows Valley Supply on August 3rd. A total of 55 people were in attendance to learn about pasture fencing set up.
- Staff sent out information to local meat processors regarding the deer donation program.
- Staff have been working to finalize promotional materials for the 2023 Conserve Sauk Film Festival that will be held on November 4th. A variety of conservation focused films will be screened at this event, including several films produced locally and regionally.
- Staff began completing status reviews on 25% of manure storage facilities in the county to ensure they are in good, working condition or documented as idle if no longer being used.

WI Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Field Day



LRE assisted the USDA-NRCS at the Intertribal Agriculture Council/Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Field Day on August 9th. USDA-NRCS staff presented soil health information in a classroom setting and LRE staff presented the rainfall simulator afterwards. USDA-NRCS staff are assisting the tribes with addressing food security issues by promoting sustainable agricultural practices on tribal owned lands.

Sauk County Drinking Water Program



Staff assisted with the 17th annual Sauk County drinking water program. This program is a collaboration with Extension, Sauk County Public Health and local towns. Each year, 2-3 towns are selected to participate in the program. Residents can choose to participate by sampling their water and having it analyzed at UW-Stevens Point. Results are presented at an educational program afterwards. A total of 90 people from the towns of Baraboo, Excelsior, and Freedom attended the educational program on August 29th.

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Planning and Zoning

Highlights

- Staff continue to work with HKGi meeting with municipalities and stakeholders and coordinating additional public input opportunities on proposed route alternatives.
- Land use and sanitary permits are issued daily. Currently we're at 403 this year, up 10% from this time last year (362 permits in 2022).
- Staff assisted the Towns of Winfield, La Valle, Honey Creek, Freedom, Sumpter, Excelsior, and Dellona with Comprehensive Plan updates.
- Staff are working to finalize the County Farm Education Hub development plans. An open house meeting was held in Reedsburg to showcase the final draft plans.

Mine Reclamation



The Matoushek Quarry is nearing the end of a 65 year long mining history. Nonmetallic mining is permitted through the LRE department and a large part of the permitting process is to establish a local program that ensures effective reclamation after resource extraction is complete. State standards are administered that dictate the final slope, established vegetative cover, and what materials may be used in the reclamation process. This month an inspection was conducted at the Matoushek site to inventory the final stockpiles and discuss with a representative of Milestone Materials, the current operator, what materials must be removed for disposal and what can be safely incorporated into the landscape.

GSST Goette Road Connection Construction



The Goette Road Connection is finally underway! This one-half miles rails with trails will connect the existing GSST to Goette Road and a new parking lot being funded by the Town of Merrimac. Depending on the outcome of the GSST master planning process, this section of trail may become part of the main line GSST or may be utilized as a spur trail that connects to DLSP. While there have been a couple of construction challenges, the project overall is progressing on time and within the budget. The Sauk County Highway Department is completing the work.

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Parks and Recreation

Highlights

- The Sasquatch Search officially ended, with over 5 winners and a total of 56 participants of all ages joining in on the search.
- Staff met with members from the Village of LaValle and Town of LaValle to discuss the master planning process for Hemlock County Park.
- Maintenance staff attended a playground safety and maintenance training hosted by County Mutual.
- Sauk County received additional funding for approximately 23 more miles for snowmobile maintenance funding, resulting in a total grant award of \$71,490 per year.
- Improvements to the horse campground and accessible hunting area continued.

Shelter and Bathroom Removal at White Mound Co. Park



As part of the master planning process for White Mound County Park, it was determined under Goal 1 of the Outdoor Recreation Opportunities that Shelter #2 and the nearby bathrooms were to be removed to refine the visitor experience and better manage park wetlands. The shelter and nearby bathrooms were removed in August and this project is officially completed.

Movie at the Park



Our first outdoor movie was held at White Mound County Park. Staff set up lights, a movie screen and featured The Parent Trap movie. Glow sticks were handed out to every kid in attendance, and approximately 80 park users joined us! Staff received a handful of positive feedback from park users as a result. The last outdoor movie for 2023 will take place in September.