

# Land Resources and Environment Department: Monthly Report

## Land Conservation

### Highlights

- The final pasture walk was held at the Bauer Farm near Hillsboro on 12/7 with 20 people in attendance. The focus of the event was on winter grazing logistics.
- Staff attended the Wisconsin Water and Soil Health (WWASH) Conference in Wisconsin Dells 12/7-12/8.
- Wheat Week lessons were presented at East Elementary School in Baraboo on 12/11-12/15 with 60 students participating.
- Staff attended a winter grazing workshop on 12/14 at Ron Schoepp's farm near Lake Wisconsin.
- Nutrient Management Farmer Education Classes were held at MATC in Reedsburg 12/20-12/21 with 3 farmers in attendance.

### Annual Macroinvertebrate Collection



Photo Credit: UWSP Aquatic Biomonitoring Laboratory

Each year, staff identify watersheds to monitor to assess the overall health of the water bodies and determine if any additional resources are needed. Macroinvertebrates are collected in the fall and sent to an ecologist for analysis. Macroinvertebrates are bottom-dwelling water bugs that can be found in rivers and streams. They are the base of all aquatic food webs and a good measure of water quality. Some organisms are sensitive to water pollution and their presence indicates that a waterbody is healthy.

### Shoreline Stabilization Signs



Staff recently designed a new sign for shoreline stabilization projects on lake front properties. These signs will be placed along the lakeshore so they are visible to boaters and property owners. These signs help to promote the benefits of shoreline stabilization projects and provide department contact information. We've had success in the past with grazing and cover crop signs to generate interest in these conservation practices and we hope for the same results with these new signs.



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## Planning and Zoning

### Highlights

- Staff are working with the City of Baraboo and Village of West Baraboo to identify a preferred route for the GSST through the Baraboo Area. This work is being done in preparation of an application for a Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant.
- The GSST Goette Road connection is nearing completion with the final step being installation of a fence between the trail and active rail corridor.
- Staff completed the first review of the newly drafted zoning ordinance. Next steps include preliminary legal review and review by DATCP.
- All 35 permitted mines within LRE jurisdiction have submitted their annual reclamation permits.

### Nonmetallic Mine Site Inspections



Tate Hillmann met with a representative from Milestone Materials to inspect all of the mines that they operate within his territory to complete the annual site inspections.

These inspections are conducted to help verify the active and open acres along with reclaimed acres of the mines and accuracy of reports submitted by the mine operators for the annual reclamation permits submitted to LRE as required by the WI DNR.

These inspections also allow for LRE staff to view the sites to ensure compliance with the WPDES stormwater permit for each mine.

### Floodplain Zoning Administration



Chapter 9 Floodplain Zoning Ordinance regulates activities that occur in mapped FEMA Floodplains as well as adopted Dam Breach studies. Regulations consists of the type, location and elevation of certain structures such as residential homes and garages. The regulation also extends to limiting/prohibiting placing fill in the floodplain, which could result in the reduction of flood storage capacity thereby flooding lands downstream or by impeding the movement of floodwater.

Over the last year staff have been working with a landowner that placed fill in the floodway/floodplain, which was in violation of Floodplain Zoning Regulations. Compliance was recently achieved through the removal of the fill material.



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## Parks and Recreation

### Highlights

- White Mound Drive, the road through White Mound County Park, was closed for the winter
- New daily entrance passes were designed by staff, with the hopes of a new design being more user-friendly
- A total of 165 early reservation requests were received and processed by staff
- New gates were installed on White Mound Drive, at the horse campground and on South Lake Road
- Staff attended a Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association meeting
- Multiple park users visited White Mound County Park to view the dark sky
- Staff continued to attend planning meetings for the Wisconsin River Recreation Bridge

### Horse campground improvements continue



Staff finished construction on the manure stacking pad, pictured to the left, located in the horse campground. The manure pad was required to be roofed as water coming into contact or seeping from the manure is considered concentrated and contaminated with the amount of nutrients. Staff also planted the trees purchased in fall of 2023 all throughout the campsites and campground. Minor finishing touches and installation of fire rings and picnic tables will occur in the spring.

### Work begins on rustic campsites



As a result of the White Mound County Park master plan, it was determined that rustic campsites should be constructed throughout the park. Staff cleared down trees from access trails and made the campsite areas level for picnic tables and tents. There will be 3 campsites total, with one being located east of White Mound Lake (view from this campsite is pictured to the left). Signage, picnic tables and fire rings will be put at each campsite later this year.