

Land Resources and Environment Department: March 2025 Monthly Report

Land Conservation

- Staff attended and presented at the Wisconsin Land + Water Annual Conference in Green Bay March 5th - 7th.
- Staff assisted LRPD in their annual sediment tour and culvert inventory on March 10th.
- Staff hosted a Sauk County Farm Advisory Group meeting to provide an overview of the farm to external and internal partners who may want to be involved in future projects.
- Ag plastics collection event was held on March 19th with 17 people participating.
- The 2025 Native Plant sale opened up on March 19th. A total of 125 kits are available for purchase.
- A SSWIG meeting was held on March 20th with a total of 20 people in attendance.
- Staff assisted with and presented at a Wisconsin Land + Water Young Conservation Professionals event at Bula's Pleasant Valley Farm on March 27th. A total of 25 people attended the event and learned about no till drill and planter set up, rotational grazing infrastructure and no till gardening.
- The spring Conservation Chronicle was sent out on March 31st to 357 people via MailChimp.

Conservation Farm Family of the Year



Photo Credit: WI Land + Water

Roger Bindl of RB Farms in Spring Green was awarded the 2025 Conservation Farm Family of the Year award at the WI Land + Water Conference on March 6th. This award promotes farm conservation accomplishments by recognizing farmers performing outstanding work, including community involvement and conservation education. RB Farms will be featured in a professionally produced short film that showcases the farm, highlights their conservation practices, and shares their unique story.

Prescribed Burn Training



In collaboration with Pheasants Forever, the LRE department hosted a prescribed burn training for conservation professionals at the Sauk County Farm on March 13th. Prescribed fire is an important management tool in natural areas and helps to rejuvenate native prairie plantings and set back woody vegetation. Attendees learned about fire safety, how to read a burn plan, and were able to use prescribed fire tools. A total of 17 people participated in the training exercise.

Land Resources and Environment

Department: Quarterly Report (Q1 2025)

Land Conservation

Output & Outcome Measures

Share information and engage with the public utilizing social media and email marketing.

Several emails have been sent out utilizing MailChimp on topics including grazing and soil health workshops, Ag Plastics Collection, Conservation Chronicle, NACD Poster Contest, 2024 Grazing video, Native Plant Sale, and Tree Sale Updates.



38 MailChimp Emails
12,064 Contacts

Engagement with Facebook users continues to help inform followers about programs that are offered and topics of interest. Some popular posts included the following topics: Farmland Owner Webinar Series, Conservation Valentines, NACD Poster Contest results, Serge's Grazing Advocate Award, and Native Plant Sale.



50 Facebook Posts
13,236 Reached

Provide residents with opportunities to recycle agricultural plastics and properly dispose of household hazardous waste and electronics.



Ag Plastics Collection
2 Events, 25 Participants,
6.33 Tons

Ag Plastics Collection Events are held every other month and continue to be a valuable resource for farmers who are not able to dispose of their agricultural plastics through the Revolution Plastics dumpster program.



Clean Sweep Voucher Program
3 Participants

The Dane County Clean Sweep Voucher Program was established in 2021 after the spring Clean Sweep Event was eliminated. Participation continues to be steady as we encourage participation in this alternative program.

Provide outreach and education programs to school aged audiences and adults.

Staff have provided school aged programming including the following topics: NACD Poster contest, WI Land + Water State Speaking Contest, River Health, and Wheat Week at Tower Rock Elementary School.



2 School Aged Programs
192 Students Reached

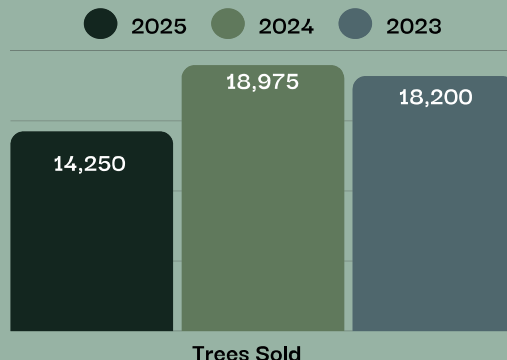
Adult outreach and education programs for Q1 2024 included NMFE training, SSWIG meetings, Annual Soil Health Workshop, SSWIG Shop Talk Event, and presenting at the annual WI Land + Water Conference.



14 Adult Outreach Events
477 Participants

Enhance natural communities by offering the annual tree sale and native plant sale

The annual Sauk County Tree Sale closed on February 28th. Order numbers are down from the 2024 sale.



The second annual native plant sale was held this year with five pre-planned kits being offered. This program was very popular in 2024 with the initial supply of kits selling out in 48 hours. As of March 31st, only 31 kits are available out of the 125 kits offered through the sale. Plant distribution will be on May 30th at the Sauk County Highway Department.



Native Plant Sale
23,008 Plants Sold

Land Resources and Environment

Department: March 2025 Monthly Report

Planning & Zoning

- Approval of contract for County Comprehensive and Strategic Plans and internal logistics for public engagement.
- Finalizing the Town of Reedsburg's Comprehensive Plan.
- Staff are revising the Farmland Preservation Plan draft based on comments received from DATCP and Towns.
- Staff continue to review and revise the Chapter 7 Zoning Code rewrite.
- Staff attended a septic system training held in Portage by Weiser Concrete.
- Staff worked with Administration and GIS to utilize Opengov to develop a record type related to the implementation of 2023 Wisconsin Act 235.

We're in the cloud 24/7



As the first county in Wisconsin to launch a modern cloud based paperless permitting system, we are proud of the progress we are making. We are continuing to build-out and refine our record types (aka applications), we are transitioning to email/text notices for septic maintenance/pumping, and staff can easily access information to answer questions effectively and quickly for the public. Gone are the days of rummaging around a co-workers desk or file cabinet for a permit application! Even more exciting are the observed times that the public and contractors are submitting applications: 9:38 p.m., 11:11 p.m., 10:29 p.m., 3:25 a.m. and 2:43 a.m. I guess you could say we are now a 24/7 Planning & Zoning cloud machine... literally.

Navigability Determination



Staff conducted an onsite navigability determination on an unnamed waterbody. The purpose of the determination was to provide guidance and direction to an adjacent landowner regarding a proposed project and what types of restrictions and permitting may be required. Navigability determinations are more easily completed during Spring melt or 'freshets' as there commonly is more water flowing through the landscape due to both melt and precipitation. Waterbodies do not need to be navigable throughout the year and only need to be navigable on a recurring basis. This waterway was deemed to be navigable in opinion as a watercraft was not floated.

Land Resources and Environment

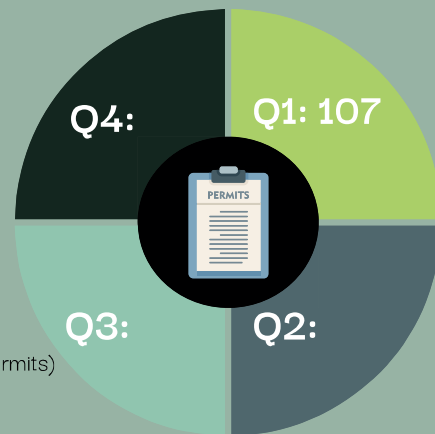
Department: Quarterly Report (Q1 2025)

Planning and Zoning

Output & Outcome Measures

Land Use Permits Issued Quarter 1

Compared to the previous year's Q1 outputs, there has not been an increase in the number land use permits issued, however sanitary permits have doubled. Collectively land use permits issued for building projects typically include single family homes, accessory buildings for farms and residences, and septic systems. The estimated value of new home construction for Q1, based on data obtained in Opengov, is \$12,301,500 while the value of farm and residential accessory buildings is \$1,824,086.



Quarter 1 Land Use Permit Details

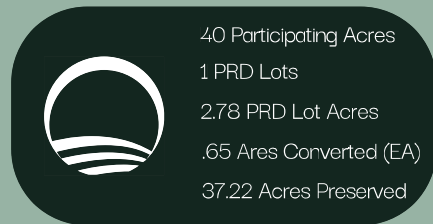
Single Family Residential: 24 permits

Accessory Buildings: 39 permits (Farm: 16 permits) (Residential: 23 permits)

Sanitary: 44 permits (Reconnect: 5) (Replacements: 7) (New: 32)

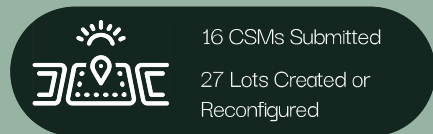
Planned Rural Developments

The Planned Rural Development program can be utilized in the Resource Conservancy and Exclusive Agriculture zoning districts. The metrics of the program in reflect both zoning districts, however acres converted out of an agriculture use, such as crop and pastureland, apply only to the Exclusive Agriculture zoning district, which is certified to meet the farmland preservation requirements expressed in Wis. Stat ch 91. The maximum conversation rate allowed annually in the Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District is 5%.



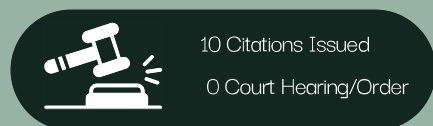
Land Division / Certified Survey Maps

Staff have completed or are currently reviewing CSMs that have been submitted since January. Of the 27 newly created/reconfigured lots, roughly 1/3rd may be utilized as building lots that can support the construction of new rural single-family homes.



Violations/Citations

The majority of citations issued this far this year are for failure to pump/maintain septic systems. There have not been any court hearings/court orders thus far in 2025.



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Parks and Recreation

- The piers at all Sauk County boat landings were installed, which includes the piers at the North End Boat Landing on Lake Redstone, the Summer Oaks Boat Landing on Lake Wisconsin and the boat landing at White Mound Lake.
- The final payment for the off-highway motorcycle grant was received.
- White Mound Drive was cleared off and opened for the year.
- Staff assisted in a prescribed burn at the Sauk County Farm.
- Staff completed the first water test and chemistry monitoring of White Mound Lake, which checks for clarity and helps determine if nutrient pollution is occurring.
- Seasonal Worker interviews were held, and 5 employees were hired - 3 of which are returning employees from prior years.
- 27 News WKOW visited White Mound County Park to film a segment on the accessible hunting blind.

Music in the Park stage complete



For park events and our Music in the Park series, park staff built a stage this past winter/spring. As part of the project, Park staff removed a dilapidated farm building. Much of the lumber from this building was repurposed to build the walls, ceiling and posts. The approximate stage is 11' x 14' with electric lights and outlets, and is road legal. It will provide a wonderful stage for music, ceremonies, etc.

Egg Hunt event at White Mound County Park



Our annual Egg Hunt event was back at White Mound County Park! Staff hid 4 large eggs throughout the park, and when park users find one, they are asked to bring it to the office to claim a prize. This also gets park users on trails they might not normally hike. We've had a great turnout so far, with over 100 participants. Out of the 4 eggs, 3 have been found already. There is still one egg out there (as of 4/3).

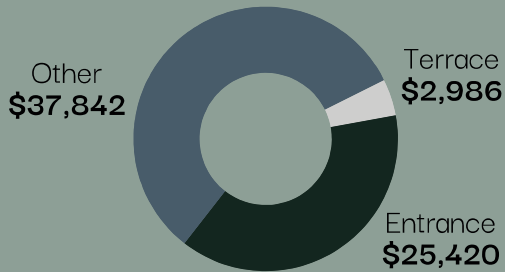
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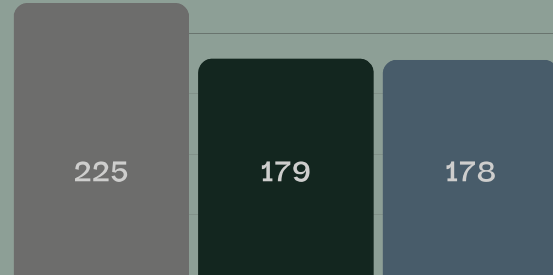
Output & Outcome Measures

Revenue Collected



Approximately **\$66,248** in revenue has been collected from January 1 to March 31, 2025.

2025 2024 2023



Passes Given to Sauk Co. Veterans

Social Media

Engagement with social media (Facebook and Instagram) users continues to help inform followers about events that are offered and topics of interest. Some popular posts included the announcement of White Mound Drive opening and a Throwback Thursday post of a diving platform.

24
social media posts
Jan. 1 - Mar. 31

82,746
social media views
Jan. 1 - Mar. 31

Programs and Activities Offered

There was two events held in Q1, including the annual Egg Hunt and a Sauk County Parks crossword puzzle. The crossword puzzle included facts on all Sauk County parks. For the Egg Hunt, staff hid 4 large eggs throughout the park for park users to find. This event will run until April 20, 2025.

2
event

6
prizes

151
participants

Camping Reservations



Over **605** total camping reservations have been made from January 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025.

Prairie Smoke Terrace & Shelter Rentals

From January 1 through March 31, 2025, our office was especially busy with processing reservations made for shelter rentals, campsites and the Prairie Smoke Terrace. We expect many more reservations throughout 2025.

11
Shelter #1
reservations

31
Prairie Smoke Terrace
reservations