

## RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ - 2019

### SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BEAR CREEK AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE AREA IN THE TOWN OF BEAR CREEK

**Background:** An Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) is an area of contiguous land, devoted primarily to agricultural use, as designated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) through the Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative in response to a local petition. The designation of an AEA identifies an area as valuable for current and future agricultural uses and may help to promote the development of agricultural businesses. An AEA designation enables eligible farmers to enter into voluntary Farmland Preservation Agreements with the Wisconsin DATCP for a 15-year period and to receive income tax credits in return for preserving their land in agricultural use and meeting state agricultural performance standards. The petition for establishment of an AEA must be jointly filed by at least five eligible farmers within the boundaries of the proposed AEA, and by each county, town or municipality in which any part of the proposed AEA is located. In spring 2019, Sauk County staff were approached by landowners in the Town of Bear Creek seeking assistance with establishing an AEA. Many of these landowners held Farmland Preservation Agreements in the past that have since expired. Establishing an AEA in the Town of Bear Creek is the only opportunity for these landowners to enter into new voluntary agreements and be eligible for the Farmland Preservation tax credit. The completed AEA petition application is attached as Appendix A. On June 5, 2019, the Bear Creek Town Board approved a resolution supporting the establishment of the Bear Creek AEA.

**Fiscal Impact:** ☐ None ☒ Budgeted Expenditure ☐ Not Budgeted

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in regular session, that the County of Sauk supports the establishment of the Bear Creek Agriculture Enterprise Area within Sauk County, Wisconsin.

For consideration by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on June 18, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

#### LAND RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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CHUCK SPENCER, Chair

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RANDALL PUTTKAMER

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CHUCK WHITSELL

**Fiscal Note:** Cost to administer program requirements on lands enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program amounts to one staff member per 250 participants. Approximately 35% of staff time is spent on administration of the Farmland Preservation Program is offset by state staffing grants.

**Information System Note:** No Information System impact