
The Winnebago Conservationist

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Our mission is to provide competent, professional services in the planning, design and implementation of programs and projects that help protect, restore, and sustain the natural resources of Winnebago County and the region.

The Winnebago Conservationist

provides up-to-date details about land and water resource management issues that are of interest to people throughout Winnebago County. We trust this information will be useful to you. If you, or other people you know, did not receive this newsletter directly, but would like to be placed on our mailing list, please call our office. We will be happy to include you in the next mailing.

Construction Site Erosion Control

Greg Baneck – Watershed Project Manager

Soil erosion is often associated only with agricultural practices. This is far from a complete picture. Without erosion control, a typical acre under construction delivers as much sediment as 75 acres of cropland. Sediment-laden water leaving eroding construction sites can clog storm sewers and ditches, degrade wetlands, or enter lakes and streams, where it destroys fish and wildlife habitat and interferes with swimming and boating.

Through erosion control planning and installation of relatively inexpensive practices, most soil erosion and related water quality problems can be reduced by 50-80%.

Here are some tips in preparing for any private or public construction activity:

- ✓ Schedule construction activity to minimize the time a site is laid bare and open to erosion.
- ✓ Maintain as much vegetation as possible, and seed down areas as soon as possible, when construction activities are over.
- ✓ Whenever possible, divert water coming downslope around open construction sites.
- ✓ While site is disturbed, use temporary sediment traps such as silt fence or straw bale barriers to prevent eroding soil from escaping the site.
- ✓ Protect or stabilize runoff channels with erosion control matting or sod.

All these tips can be summarized in one sentence: Keep soil erosion to a minimum, and keep the soil that does erode from leaving the construction site.

Grassed Waterways – A Sound Investment Worth Maintaining

Greg Baneck – Watershed Project Manager

Without good soil and water, successful farming is nearly impossible. That's why maintaining grassed waterways, which help to save both soil and water, can be well worth the time and effort, providing dividends in the long run.

Waterways should be gently sloping on the cross section and wide enough to contain the run-off from most storms. Grass should be cut and removed at least twice each growing season to prevent the accumulation of silt and debris, which seriously cuts down the lifetime of a waterway. Waterways work best in combination with other soil conservation practices.

Maintenance is as important as proper installation of grass waterways. These steps will help maintain good waterways:

- ✓ Inspect waterways after heavy rains and runoff, especially during establishment. Repair damage right away using fill, reshaping, keeping sod staked down, reseeding and mulching as appropriate.
- ✓ Mow waterways and remove the mowed grass. This will help to maintain thick sod and reduce sediment accumulation, which indicates that erosion is occurring in adjoining fields. Provide nesting cover for wildlife by waiting until after the middle of July to mow. Close-clipped sod is also less attractive to stalk borers.
- ✓ Control weeds with herbicides that do not harm the waterway sod.
- ✓ Raise tillage machinery such as plows, disks, chisels, cultivators, etc. when crossing waterway
- ✓ Shut off herbicide applicators when crossing waterways. Herbicides washed from the surrounding land can also damage waterways.

The Winnebago Conservationist

- ✓ Avoid leaving open furrows along the edge parallel to waterways.
- ✓ Avoid using the waterways as field roads. If occasional travel is necessary, drive only along the edges of the waterways. Heavy travel will kill the sod or form ruts.
- ✓ Do not graze waterways when the ground is soft.

If sediment accumulates in a waterway, it means other soil, conservation practices are needed. These may include conservation tillage, contour strips, contour farming, or crop rotations with more hay. If sediment seriously reduces the capacity of a waterway, rebuilding it is the only solution, and investment in the previous waterway is lost.

Although waterways may be relatively expensive to construct, they can be considered an investment in your land. Properly constructed and maintained, grassed waterways, coupled with a good soil conservation program on the rest of the land, will keep the soil on the land where it is needed.

For more information about installing a waterway on your farm, or to find out if you may be eligible for cost-sharing, please call (920) 232-1950 or (920) 727-8642.

Drainage Plan Review Town of Vinland

Keith D. Schroeder – Conservation Technician

On February 6, 1979, Winnebago County adopted a Town-County Zoning Ordinance, Section 17.02(6), which addresses Surface Water Drainage. Surface Water Drainage is also under Section 2.8 of the Town of Vinland Ordinance. The purpose of these sections is to protect property and structures from damage caused by increased surface water runoff. This increase is due to commercial, industrial, and residential development. Copies of the proposed drainage plans for the Town of Vinland are received at the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) for review and comments. The LWCD reviews the drainage plans in all unincorporated areas outside of the 300 feet of a navigable stream and 1000 feet of a lake. Any development occurring within these limits should contact the Winnebago County Zoning Office for assistance.

On February 8, 1999 the Town of Vinland adopted a resolution requiring certification from the LWCD in writing that each drainage plan is in compliance before the Town of Vinland Building Inspector will issue an Occupancy Permit. This is due, in part, to the concern by local government agencies that the approved drainage plans weren't being installed or maintained properly.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to submit a completed drainage plan to the LWCD for review. The property owner also needs to notify the LWCD to set up an appointment for a final onsite drainage inspection. The final onsite inspection is required before obtaining the occupancy permit from the building inspector. Onsite inspections are required for all development sites.

Please contact the Winnebago County LWCD office, located at 625 E. County Rd. Y, Suite 100, Oshkosh, WI 54901 or call (920) 232-1950 or (920) 727-8642.

Cover Crops Following Corn Silage

Tom Davies - Agronomist

As dairy farms requirements for corn silage increase, the amount of crop residue after harvest decreases. Surface crop residue is an essential part of controlling soil erosion.

Without crop residue cover, the bare soil is exposed to wind, raindrops, and surface water movement. To significantly reduce soil erosion, the surface cover should average 25 to 30 percent (%). On harvested corn silage fields, the average is usually 5% to 10%. Nonetheless, for Wisconsin farmers to remain profitable, the number of acres harvested as corn silage will continue to rise.

With this in mind, Cover Crops become a very important tool to reduce soil erosion, and supply feed and livestock bedding for the farm. Cover Crops, such as Winter Wheat or Winter Rye, can be seeded after corn silage is harvested. Many farmers are no-till drilling directly into the corn stubble or using reduced tillage to prepare a seedbed.

Winter Rye or Winter Wheat is harvested in spring for feed or suppressed; and soybeans, alfalfa, sudangrass, forage sorghum, or short maturity corn can be planted for an additional crop that season.

Winter Wheat harvested for grain and straw can provide stubble to be left for winter cover or no-till seeded into alfalfa, Winter Rye or back into Winter Wheat. It is not recommended that Winter Wheat be planted in the same field for more than two consecutive years.

When a Cover Crop is established, the plant's leaves intercept and absorb the energy of raindrops, and prevent the soil underneath it from being broken into small particles and carried away by water moving across the surface. The root mass of a Cover Crop helps anchor the soil as water moves across the surface. The roots also improve the downward movement of water into the soil profile. The Cover Crop plant tissue at the surface and the residue from the previous crop disrupts the flow of surface water; and reduces its energy,

The Winnebago Conservationist

volume, and momentum. Working Cover Crops into your cropping system can greatly reduce damaging erosion events in late fall, winter, and early spring.

If you would like more information about blending Cover Crops into your rotation and reducing the soil erosion on your farm, please call your Land and Water Conservation Department at (920) 232-1950, or (920) 727-8642.

Nutrient Management Planning As Required By the Revised Livestock Waste Management Ordinance

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!!
Tom Davies - Agronomist

As a result of the revisions to the Livestock Waste Management Ordinance, all wastes from new and existing livestock waste storage facilities are to be managed and utilized in accordance with a USDA-NRCS Standard 590 Nutrient Management Plan. A current (590) Nutrient Management Plan is to be submitted by the operator of the livestock waste storage facility by June 1st annually to the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department until the livestock waste storage facility is no longer in use, and it has been properly abandoned.

Throughout the fall and winter, we will be contacting and working with the farmers that have livestock waste storage facilities in Winnebago County. Our mission is to provide them with the information and help needed get them started doing Nutrient Management Planning. Nutrient Management enables producers to get the greatest economic return from the plantfood being produced on the farm, while protecting their land's natural resources. Nutrient Management can substantially reduce the amount of commercial fertilizer required to grow your crops.

Taking credit for the natural plantfood provided in manure and legume crops is a practice that many producers have been doing in one form or another for years. We are not reinventing the wheel! What Nutrient Management Planning does is fine tune this practice based on sound soil tests, University of Wisconsin fertilizer recommendations, and a common sense approach to conserving the natural resources of your land. Your Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department can provide the information

needed for Nutrient Management Planning, and help keep more of those hard-earned dollars in your pocket!

Producers with Livestock in Winnebago County doing Nutrient Management Planning may be eligible for cost-sharing to offset some of the expense of Soil Testing. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (WDATCP), working through Winnebago County has appropriated funds to help cost-share soil tests taken for the purpose of nutrient management planning. The funds will cover 50% of the lab fee for approximately 3,000 acres of soil tests taken on a five-acre basis, or about 600 soil samples.

Winnebago County may also have funds available through our local water quality program to help with the cost of soil testing and nutrient management plan writing.

For information on Nutrient Management Planning, please contact Tom Davies at your Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department at (920) 232-1950, or (920) 727-8642.

LWCD Website to be Launched Soon

Brad Robole – Watershed Project Manager



The Winnebago County Land & Water Conservation Department is currently developing a website that will make information readily available to everyone on the web. The site will be located within the Winnebago County home page, and will provide information for a variety of topics including:

- LWCD Staff Directory
- Land Conservation Committee members
- Local Contact Persons from Other Agencies
- Product Sales List
- Equipment Rental List
- Geographic Information System Capabilities
- Links to Related Websites
- and more!

Web users will be able to reach the website by going to the Winnebago County home page at www.winnebago.co.us and clicking on Land & Water Conservation. It is our hope to have the site running by the end of November.

The Winnebago Conservationist

Winnebago County Conservation Speaking/Poster Contest

Dawn Banerdt-Adams - LWCD Secretary

Students from all over Winnebago County participated in the 42nd annual Conservation Speaking Contest. The first place contestant (see below) advanced to a nine-county area contest, held in New London, on October 22.

The local speaking contest was held on October 14, 1999 at the Winnebago County J.P. Coughlin Building. The local poster contest was held Wednesday, November 10, where the posters were judged by the Land & Water Conservation Department, UWEX, Parks Department, WDNR, Farm Service Agency, NRCS, and Rural Development.

Speaking contest winners in the County contest are as follows:

Elementary Division (Grades 5-6)

1st: Marni Hoest-Maplewood Middle, Menasha
2nd: A.J. Schuh-Coolidge Elementary, Neenah
3rd: Michael Rowan-Maplewood Middle, Menasha

Marni advanced to the Area Speaking Contest, which was held on October 22, 1999 in New London. She did very well, receiving 3rd place. For the Poster Contest, there are a few changes. There are now three categories for posters instead of just one. The additional two categories are Computer/Graphic Design posters, and Photograph posters. Another change in the poster contests is that the Area and State poster contests will be held in Spring and Summer of 2000, respectively, instead of the Fall of the same year that the local poster contests were held.

Poster contest winners in the County contest are as follows:

Photographic Poster Category

Middle Division (Grades 4-6)

1st: Mallory Lorge-Maplewood Middle, Menasha
2nd: Nicole Beaver-Clayton Elementary, Neenah
3rd: Holly Ross-Maplewood Middle, Menasha

Senior Division (Grades 10-12)

1st: Eric Hausner-Oshkosh West High, Oshkosh

Poster Category

Primary Division (Grades K-1)

1st: Collin Williams-Coolidge Elementary, Neenah

Elementary Division (Grades 2-3)

1st: Matthew Franke-Coolidge Elementary, Neenah

2nd: Peder Cho-Coolidge Elementary, Neenah
3rd: Emily Bartman-Washington Elementary, Neenah

Middle Division (Grades 4-6)

1st: Marni Hoest-Maplewood Middle, Menasha
2nd: Ashley Malueg-Maplewood Middle, Menasha
3rd: Ryan McFarland-Coolidge Elementary, Neenah

Junior Division (Grades 7-9)

1st: Andy Prettl-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh
2nd: Andy Zinth-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh
3rd: Matt Gunderson-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh

Senior Division (Grades 10-12)

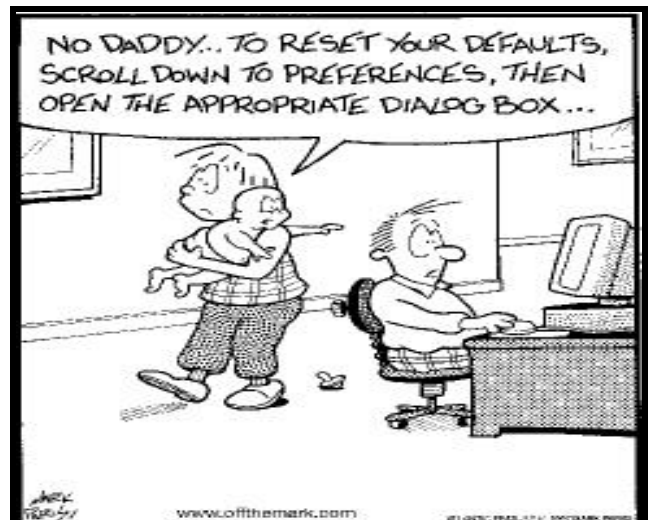
1st: Jenny Steinfert-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh
2nd: Randi Rahmer-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh
3rd: Gene Delzer-Oshkosh North, Oshkosh

A special thanks to the generous sponsors of the prizes: Menards, Oshkosh; Paper Tiger Books, Oshkosh; and Pheasants Forever-Fox River Valley Chapter, Neenah; Also, a thank you to all the students, teachers, and judges who participated in the Winnebago County LWCD Conservation Speaking and Poster Contests.

Hello From The New Geographic Information Systems Manager

Dean Kaderabek – GIS Manager

My name is Dean Kaderabek and I am replacing Jennifer Reek as the Land and Water Conservation Departments' GIS Manager. My background includes over 6 years experience working with the GIS (geographic information system) within Manitowoc County. I am very pleased to be working here at Winnebago County and look forward to assisting you in your mapping needs.



The Winnebago Conservationist

A Map Is Worth A Thousand Words

A map of your property showing the parcel with roads, waterways, wetlands, buildings, crop field boundaries, soils, and topography can help in farm or shoreline planning. A table can be produced of soil types and acreage within each field. The topography would show the drainage patterns using 2' contours. For riparian owners, the maps can help with site plans for shoreline plantings. Ortho-photography is also available as a background. Please call (920) 232-1950, (920) 727-8642; or stop in at my office at the Land and Water Conservation Department for more information and a pricing schedule.

What is GIS?

The County and its residents face increasingly complex environmental problems that threaten our continued long-term existence. Solving these problems with citizen participation requires many different strategies, including combining and integrating many different kinds of information. A geographic information system (GIS) is a tool designed specifically for this purpose.

A geographic information system is a complex information management system requiring appropriate hardware, software, spatial data, and human skills. GIS is important to our department because it offers a means of interpreting and dealing with the critical conservation management issues that we currently face.

A GIS can be distinguished from other technologies by the capabilities it possesses to help answer questions such as...

- What features exist at a specific location?
- What patterns or relationships exist between geographic features?
- What are the impacts if something is allowed to occur at a specific site?
- Where are the significant features located?

These questions represent only a few of the powerful capabilities that a GIS offers our department.

GIS Myths and Facts

Myth: GIS comes in a box, just plug it in.

Fact: GIS is not a simple technology. The design and implementation of a GIS is a major long-term undertaking.

Myth: GIS will make decisions for us.

Fact: GIS is a tool used to assist people with making decisions.

Myth: Our partners have the data we need.

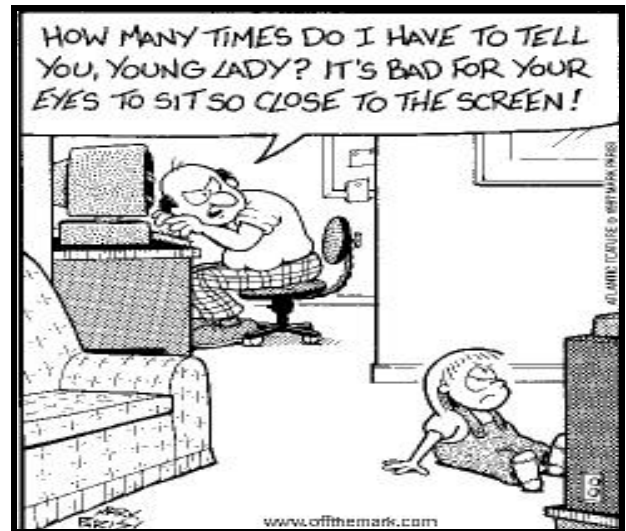
Fact: Some organizations have data, some even have it in digital format. However, data often contains errors, is out of date, and usually positionally inaccurate. In addition the original data collection methodologies may not suit our needs.

Myth: GIS is a fad.

Fact: The worldwide GIS market, including services and data conversion, is around \$4.3 billion and growing steadily. Originally implemented mainly by government, it is now expanding rapidly into the private sector.

Myth: GIS is used to create pretty maps.

Fact: Although it is true that GIS has the capability to create a variety of useful information products, it also serves as an information hub. Among other significant features, GIS has modeling and visual analysis capabilities, and provides for the integration of disparate data sets.



Shoreland Protection and Restoration Workshop – March of 2000

Melanie Leet – ARD Watershed Project Technician

Winnebago County lies entirely within the Fox–Wolf River Basin and contains 84,000 acres of surface water. The Winnebago System includes the 'pool' lakes of Winnebago, Little Lake Butte des Morts, Winneconne, and Poygan along with the network of streams and rivers that flow into them. It also includes the main tributary waters of the Upper Fox and Wolf Rivers.

There are many areas within the Winnebago System where we can find degraded shorelines. A degraded

The Winnebago Conservationist

shoreline is one that is not functioning properly with respect to providing habitat, filtering nutrients and pollutants, and preventing erosion. So, why should we be concerned about this degradation? Shoreland deterioration reduces aesthetic value and contributes negatively to water quality, as can be seen by the recent algae bloom problems. This decline in water quality, in turn, decreases the value of the water resource, the community, and private property.

What can be done to prevent and correct the deterioration that has been occurring? The best solution is shoreland protection and restoration. In order to accomplish this goal, the community must be aware of the impacts of this shoreline degradation, and the importance of protection and restoration within the Winnebago System.

In order to achieve these goals, a plan of action must be created. Through the collaborative efforts of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, the Winnebago County Land & Water Conservation Department, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and a private, nonprofit group called Wild Ones, a plan was created. This plan of action includes three fact sheets to raise people's awareness and understanding of shoreland concerns, and a shoreline workshop to further educate shoreland property owners on how to revitalize their property. The three fact sheets will be sent on three different occasions as direct mailings to residents living on the Winnebago System.

- Fact Sheet 1 explains what comprises a healthy shoreland.
- Fact Sheet 2 tells what is happening to Wisconsin's shorelands.
- Fact Sheet 3 describes how the community can improve the Winnebago System shorelands.

After everyone has received all three fact sheets, an all day workshop has been planned that will go into detail on what factors indicate a healthy shoreline, how to improve and restore your shoreline, and how to protect it. This workshop is tentatively scheduled for March of 2000.



Photograph shows a reclaimed shoreline with rock rip rap and a vegetative buffer.

The Winnebago System is a precious resource that provides extraordinary fishing opportunities, wildlife habitat, recreational assets, and economic benefits to the Winnebago community. Everyone should have a vested interest in protecting the Winnebago system.

For more information about the Shoreland Protection and Restoration Workshop or the fact sheets, please contact Catherine Nieswender (UW-Extension) at (920) 232-1970 or Greg Baneck (LWCD) at (920) 232-1950.

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