

## Spring 2024



### Update from the Director

Spring is in the air, put it into your steps....

Spring was my final word in the last newsletter and my first in this edition. April is a unique time of the year depicted in the early Romans calendar. Odds are it was chosen for several reasons and revolves around the translation of April meaning new beginnings or to open. This corresponds to the changes that occur in the natural world when our land, soil and water wake up from the wintery grip and as many say, you can smell it in the air.

Our Farmers eagerly wait for our soils to wake up and when they are ready to plant, the fresh smell of earth is magic to their senses. This begins with the opening of plant buds, the first clean-up of our yards, migrations of song birds, waterfowl, fish, amphibian and reptile mating activities... the opening and beginning of life. All wildlife big and small, even the animals cared for in husbandry are managed to be timed with spring.

Click [here](#) to read full article



# Explore this week's Ag Climate Outlook report!

Featuring:

- Temperature & precipitation outlooks
- Soil moisture models
- Crop yield estimates
- Agronomic considerations, and more!

Swipe to read this week's key points



## Snowfall totals for winter 2023-24 were far below average for many across Wisconsin.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)  
12/27/2023 - 3/25/2024



Accumulated Snowfall (in.) Percent of 1891-2020 Normal  
December 9, 2023 to March 8, 2024



## Soil moisture levels remain dry for most

due in part to the lack  
of snow, and the area in  
drought has increased.

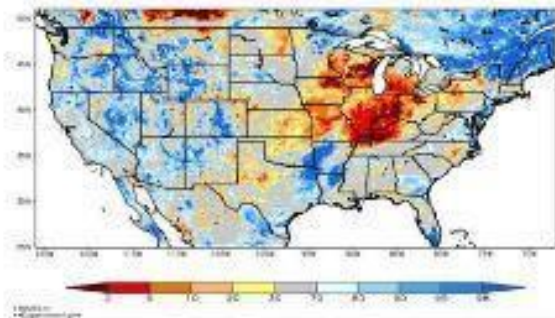


Get updates delivered to your inbox:  
[go.wisc.edu/ExtWIClimateOutlook](http://go.wisc.edu/ExtWIClimateOutlook)



## The warmer-than-average temperature trend looks to continue into the spring planting season.

SPUR1-US 0-100 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 30 Mar 2024



Monthly Temperature Outlook  
valid April 2024  
issued March 21, 2024



Monthly Precipitation Outlook  
valid April 2024  
issued March 21, 2024



## Wisconsin Ag Climate Outlook

Make well-informed decisions based on current and forecasted conditions in your area! This new tool provides a weekly report with relevant, up-to-date Wisconsin climate information. It's a great resource for Agriculture Advisors, Farmers, and Conservation Staff!

[Wisconsin Climate Outlook – Crops and Soils](#)





**Farmers Adopting Climate Smart Practices**

-Angie Ulness, Ag Educator, UW-Madison, Division of Extension

Our state is likely to become wetter, with a modest increase in total precipitation and number of intense rainfall events. According to the UW-Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, the degree of climate change varies by season, with winter experiencing the greatest warming,

Milwaukee and Green Bay experienced two of the five fastest warming winters in major cities across America over the past half-century. In the coming decades, U.S. climate will heat up overall with summer temperatures hitting record highs. The Nelson Institute predicts by 2041, Manitowoc County could experience 20 days each summer with temperature maximums over 90 degrees F. They also predict the number of days with a minimum temperature of 70 degrees F to increase by 15 days per year.

Click [here](#) to read full article

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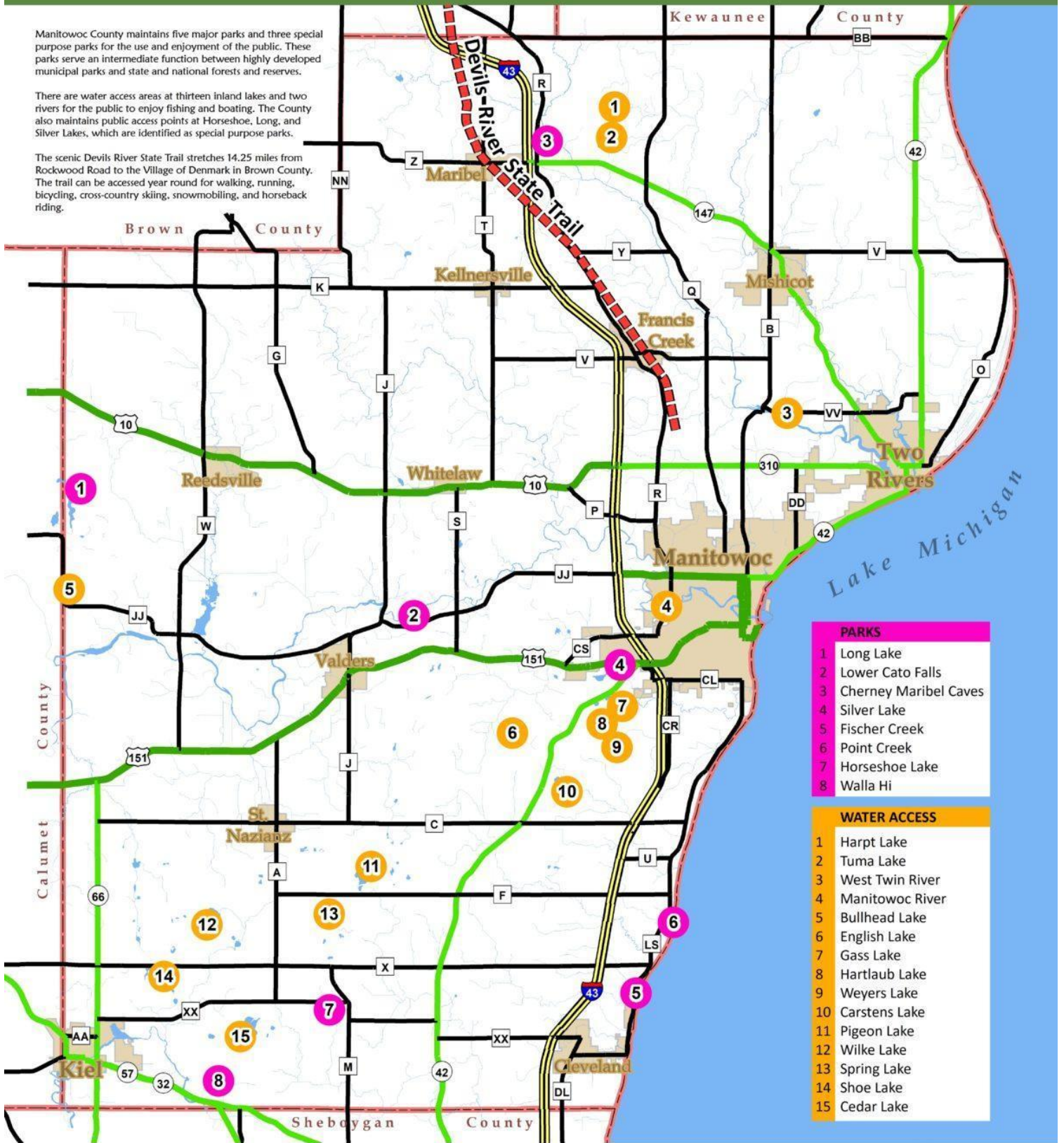


# Manitowoc County Park Locator Map

Manitowoc County maintains five major parks and three special purpose parks for the use and enjoyment of the public. These parks serve an intermediate function between highly developed municipal parks and state and national forests and reserves.

There are water access areas at thirteen inland lakes and two rivers for the public to enjoy fishing and boating. The County also maintains public access points at Horseshoe, Long, and Silver Lakes, which are identified as special purpose parks.

The scenic Devils River State Trail stretches 14.25 miles from Rockwood Road to the Village of Denmark in Brown County. The trail can be accessed year round for walking, running, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.



PARKS	
1	Long Lake
2	Lower Cato Falls
3	Cherney Maribel Caves
4	Silver Lake
5	Fischer Creek
6	Point Creek
7	Horseshoe Lake
8	Walla Hi

WATER ACCESS	
1	Harpt Lake
2	Tuma Lake
3	West Twin River
4	Manitowoc River
5	Bullhead Lake
6	English Lake
7	Gass Lake
8	Hartlaub Lake
9	Weyers Lake
10	Carstens Lake
11	Pigeon Lake
12	Wilke Lake
13	Spring Lake
14	Shoe Lake
15	Cedar Lake

1 in = 0.9 miles



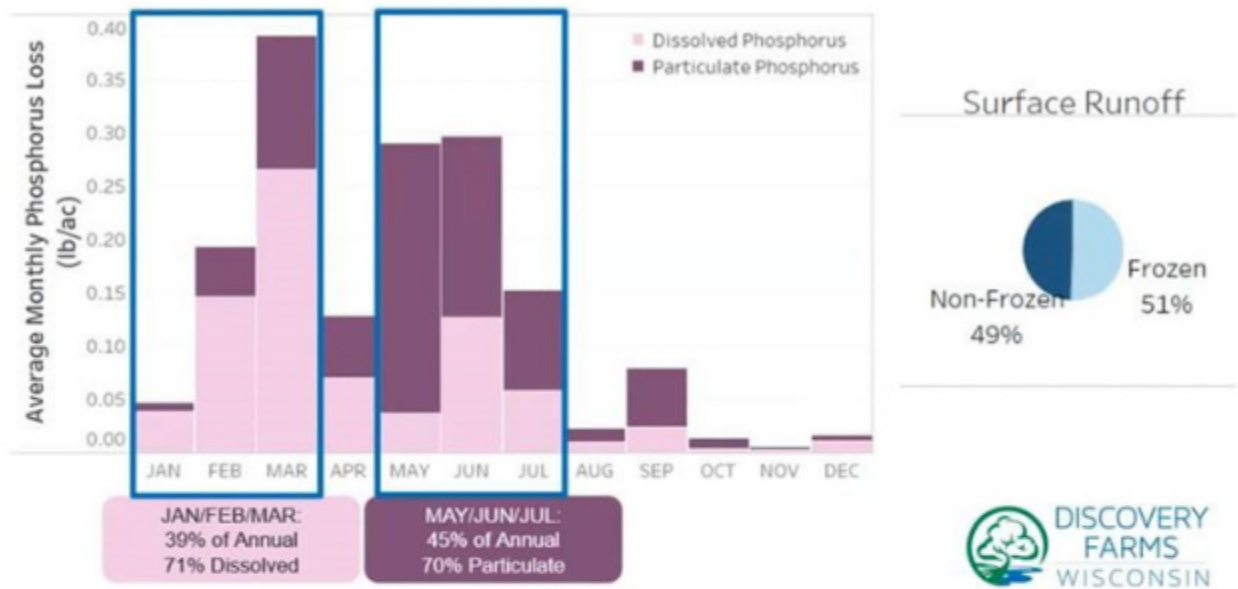
Take a Bath in the Forest for Arbor Day?

-Tara Wachowski



Happy Arbor Day! From backyards to rain forests, trees are hard at work providing the necessities of life. They clean our air and water, provide habitat for wildlife, connect communities, and support our health and well-being. In fact, did you know that spending time in nature has been proven to improve both our physical and mental well-being? This Arbor Day plant a tree, and if you're not able to plant one, head out to the woods and experience the wonders of Manitowoc County!

[Click](#) to read more tips and Discover some of Manitowoc County Parks



**May & June are high risk for soil loss! Do areas of your fields vulnerable to erosion have enough protection?**

## 🔑 AREAS OF CONCERN

Concentrated Flow Area	Waterway Outlet	Stream Bank Erosion	Widespread In-Field Erosion

\*Photos & Source: Discovery Farms WI

Often, relatively small areas of fields are responsible for the largest portion of soil losses. The Discovery Farms Wisconsin Field Walkover Guide is a great tool to assess any landscape for conservation needs: [160223-Walkover-Guide.pdf](#) ([uwdiscoveryfarms.org](http://uwdiscoveryfarms.org)). Learn on-farm lessons learned, how to find vulnerable areas, adapting tillage, waterway options, checking non-tilled areas, and practical field management decision trees. SWCD has cost-share available to help address these resource concerns. Contact our department at 920-683-4183.





# MANITOWOC COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

## Cost Shareable Practices:

- Rates vary. Contact SWCD for details.

Sinkhole/Direct Conduits to:

## GROUNDWATER

- Diversion
- Filter Strip/Waterway
- Closure
- Wetland Restoration
- Well Closure (Agricultural)
- Manure Storage Closure

## SURFACE WATER

- Cover Crops
- Waterway
- Wetland Restoration
- WASCB/Sediment Basin
- Nutrient Management Plan
- Filter Strips
- Residue Management
- Manure Storage Closure
- Barnyard Runoff Control

CALL: **920-683-4183** FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO SIGN UP



[https://manitowocountywi.gov/departments/  
soil-and-water-conservation/](https://manitowocountywi.gov/departments/soil-and-water-conservation/)



4319 Expo Drive, P.O. Box 935  
Manitowoc, WI 54221-0935

**Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department has cost-share available for the 2024 Season!**

Contact the Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department NOW to sign up.

Cost-share and technical guidance is available for a variety of practices. Call 920-683-4183 to learn more and sign up.





### **Phragmites Control for Landowners**

A group of LISMA members including Glacierland Resource Conservation & Development Council (Glacierland), Lakeshore Natural Resources Partnership (LNRP) and Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. among others, are partnering on a regional invasive phragmites effort on public and private lands across Calumet, Manitowoc, Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, & Ozaukee Counties.

Invasive Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) is a tall, colony-forming grass introduced from Europe that is taking over wetlands, rivers, shoreline habitats, and roadside ditches. It crowds out native plants, decreasing ecosystem diversity and providing little or no food for wildlife. It threatens critical nesting, foraging, and spawning habitats for native animals.

Read more on Phragmites [here](#)

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# WI NATIVE PLANTS FOR HEAVY CLAY SOILS



**1. BUTTERFLY WEED**



**2. WILD BERGAMOT**



**3. CULVER'S ROOT**

## WI NATIVE PLANTS FOR SHADE



**1. WILD GINGER**



**2. VIRGINIA BLUEBELLS**



**3. WILD COLUMBINE**

### Native Flowers for Challenging Conditions

-Tara Wachowski

It's that time of the year when gardeners rejoice in all the new life waking up from the soil and eagerly start putting in their gardens; adding compost, clearing last year's growth, starting seeds, and dreaming about all the colorful blooms and new plants to grow. You can never have too many new plants, am I right?

Gardeners may also be thinking through how they'll tackle particularly troublesome areas in their space. Two struggles for many gardeners in our County are growing plants in heavy clay soils and in shady spots. The good news is there are many Wisconsin native plants that are perfectly adapted to our heavy clay soils, climate, and shade. These native plants support pollinators and have deep roots systems that filter water and keep soil in place. If you're planning a small flowerbed or have room for a larger planting, here are a few native plant options to explore!

Read about more tips [here](#)



# OUTREACH UPDATE



**Earth Day: Roncolli High School Students and Sisters learn about forest ecosystems with the SWCD as they create terrariums at the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity sponsored Earth Day event.**



**Farmer-to-Farmer Learning: In collaboration with Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative, a producer-led group in Manitowoc County working to build healthy soil and clean water, SWCD participated in three farmer-to-farmer “Lunch & Learns.” During these working lunches, farmers led conversations centered around growing cover crops and building organic matter to improve soil health on their farms.**







**JOIN US AT BREAKFAST ON THE FARM JUNE 9TH  
8AM-NOON at Libertyland Farms Inc.**



**Well Water Screening:**

SWCD screened 104 well water samples for Nitrate in March during Groundwater Awareness Week, March 11-15. 91% of samples screened were within the EPA's drinking water standard while 9% were above the 10 mg/l action limit. Another community nitrate screening is planned for August at the Manitowoc County Fair. Results of these screenings will be released in Fall.

**Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department**  
**4319 Expo Drive, P.O. Box 935**  
**Manitowoc, WI 54221-0935**  
**P: 920.683.4183**



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