

This season has been a bit of a rollercoaster weather wise, compared to what many experienced farmers have seen and experienced over the last 30-40 years. In the past the landscape was filled with many small farms and during winter, manure management consisted of spreading solid manure with a rear discharge spreader over the snow or stacking manure piles behind the barn to wait for spring. Some farms still do this today. Farms, herds and manure volumes were smaller and consisted of heavy bedded pack manure. When spread or stored in poor locations this also had environmental impacts. Current farming has changed along with waste consistency, volumes and knowledge of what can happen when manure is applied on frozen snow-covered ground that is exposed to mother natures water cycles. [Read on...](#)

Attention Farmland Preservation Program Participants!

- Remember to claim your \$10/acre tax credit this year!
- If you bought or sold land in 2025 and you need to update your certificate. Please contact our office at **least one week before** you meet with your tax preparer.



Soil Health: The Root of a Stronger Manitowoc County

We often take the ground beneath our feet for granted, but for the Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation Department, soil health is the foundation of our communities future. It's more than just "dirt"—it is a living, breathing ecosystem that filters our water and grows our food.

You may have heard the term “regenerative agriculture” recently, especially after the USDA launched a new Regenerative Pilot Program in December 2025. But what exactly is regenerative agriculture and why does it matter? Regenerative Agriculture is a way of farming that focuses on restoring the land rather than just using it. Instead of looking at a farm one small piece at a time, this approach uses holistic, whole-farm management to improve soil health and water management. Bundling practices—meaning combining several conservation methods into one plan, is one way to begin looking at whole-farm management.

Primary Practices Included



The Manitowoc County SWCD is excited to announce our 2026 program and cost-share opportunities for producers and landowners. We encourage everyone to review the flier for program rates. If you have questions or need more guidance, please call our office and speak with a resource conservationist. 920-683-4183

Cover crop cost share is in high demand. Reach out early to ensure you secure the necessary support. Be prepared, you will need to know which field/s you want to plant to complete the application. Here's a link to the online application: <https://forms.gle/HCSnhjYjfHxidVVF9>



CONSERVATION PRACTICE FUNDING

Manitowoc
County

HARVESTABLE BUFFERS

\$225/ACRE/YEAR FOR 15 YEARS/PAID UP FRONT

A **Harvestable Buffer** is great option for farmers who are looking to protect surface water while keeping low lands in production. Cool-season grasses provide filtration and forage benefits. Plus, the program is a way to make a little extra revenue.

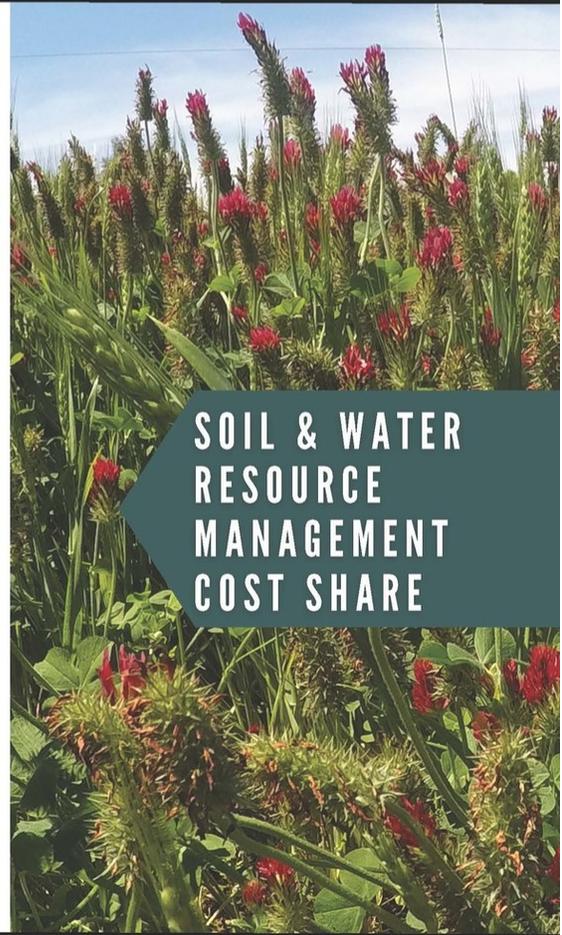
Have a Resource Concern?

Here are eligible practices that we frequently cost-share on.

- Writing a Nutrient Management Plan
\$40/acre
- Cover Crops \$35 Single Species, \$60 Single Species that overwinters, \$75 multispecies
- Grassed Waterways
- Well Abandonment
- Manure (Waste) Storage/Closure
- Groundwater Treatment Systems such as: sinkhole treatment, depth to bedrock verification, and well abandonment)
- Barnyard Runoff
- Water and Sediment Control Basin (WASCOB)

**STRUCTURAL PRACTICES ARE
TYPICALLY
COST-SHARED AT 70%**

CONTACT THE MANITOWOC COUNTY SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT
TO SIGN UP: 920-683-4183



SOIL & WATER
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
COST SHARE



CONSERVATION PRACTICE FUNDING

Manitowoc County

CREP

(CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM)



ONE-TIME SIGNING INCENTIVE PAYMENT (SIP) FOR INSTALLING PRACTICES, AND A RENTAL AMOUNT (PER YEAR) THAT DEPENDS ON THE SOIL TYPE/LOCATION. 15 YR. AGREEMENT

By enrolling in CREP, farmers re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, reduce loss of wildlife habitat, and address other objectives identified in the CREP agreement. While enrolled in CREP, farmers receive an annual rental payment for the contract period and may be eligible for additional incentives.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM



TAX CREDIT

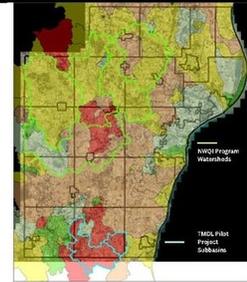
IN EXCHANGE FOR FARMING THE LAND AND MEETING CONSERVATION STANDARDS, LANDOWNERS CAN RECEIVE AN ANNUAL INCOME TAX CREDIT OF \$10.00/AC

Agriculture is vital to Wisconsin's economy and cultural identity. Our state is home to over 68,000 farms across 14.4 million acres of land. The Farmland Preservation Program provides land use tools to help ensure that this land remains available and viable for current and future generations of farmers. The program also protects soil and water because landowners must meet state conservation standards.

NWQI & TMDL PRIORITY AREAS

DO YOU FARM IN A GREEN OR BLUE OUTLINED WATERSHED?

These watersheds are located in National Water Quality Incentive Program (NWQI) and Northeast Lakeshore Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) priority areas. You may be eligible for additional and expedited cost share to install various cropland practices. Speak with a Resource Conservationist for more details!



CONTACT US:



Dave Wetenkamp
Department Director
920-683-4293
Facility Siting, Permits, Habitat, Engineering
General Questions



Cheyenne Behnke
Resource Conservationist
920-683-4906
Nutrient Management, Cost Share, Facility Siting



Joe Henson
Resource Conservationist
920-683-4888
Groundwater, Geology, CREP, Engineering



Eric Oppermann
Resource Conservationist
920-683-4163
Engineered Conservation Practices, Engineering



Tara Wachowski
Grants & Outreach Coordinator
920-683-5133



SWCD Main Line
and JeriLynn Zutz
Administrative Assistant
920-683-4183



www.manitowocountywi.gov/departments/soil-and-water-conservation



4319 Expo Drive, P.O. Box 935
Manitowoc, WI 54220



www.facebook.com/ManitowocCountySoilandWater

Need Trees? It's not too late to order!



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Wisconsin DNR Tree and Shrub Seedling Sale

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/treeplanting/order>



Camp Tapawingo Tree and Shrub Sale

[Tree Sale Form](#)

We have tree planters for rent if you need one!! Please call the office to get a spot reserved as it could fill up fast 920-683-4183.

See Tree planter [Rental Agreement](#) if interested in reserving it.

**TREE
PLANTERS
AVAILABLE
FOR RENT**

920-683-4183

OUTREACH UPDATE

Groundwater Awareness Week

Groundwater Awareness Week takes place March 8th-14th, 2026. Manitowoc County SWCD will once again offer our FREE community well water screening for nitrates. Bring 1/2 cup of well water in

a clean container to our office during business hours. Monday-Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm. Additional drop off locations will be available. Stay tuned for more information soon.

Follow our Facebook page- Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation

**FREE WELL WATER SCREENING
FOR NITRATES
MARCH 8 - 14, 2026**

Private well owners should have their water tested at least once per year.

BRING 1/2 CUP OF WATER IN A CLEAN BOTTLE
TO A SCREENING LOCATION NEAR YOU!

**NATIONAL
GROUNDWATER
AWARENESS WEEK**
March 8-14, 2026

MANITOWOC
COUNTY WI

UPCOMING EVENTS



TECH. TOOLS. TACTICS.

January 28, 2026

Members Meeting: The meeting is open to all Seven River Farm WI Discovery Center
9:00am - 9:45am Soil Cooperative members and those considering membership

10:00am - 1:30pm Forum Agenda

10:00am



Welcome:
Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative Welcomes You!
Jesse Dvorachek, Seven River Soil Cooperative President

10:15 am

Rain 360:
Costs, Payback, & Practical Wins
with Aaron Augustian, Augustian Farms



10:45 am

Corporate Member Updates & Break

11:00 am



Soil Insights That Matter:
Using Local Soil Sensor Data to boost Productivity
with Greg Olson, Sand County Foundation

11:25 am

Turning Low Yields into Profit:
Data-Driven Acre Conversion
with Johnny Behrendt, Pheasants Forever



11:45 am

Corporate Member Updates & Lunch

12:30pm

Tech. Tools. Tactics. Panel
Local Panel

1:15pm

Closing Remarks

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)



Register NOW for the Nutrient Management Farmer Education Program. Farms may be eligible for a \$700 stipend to attend. The class takes place February 13th and 20th, 2026. You MUST attend both classes and turn in a completed 2026 nutrient management plan to certify and qualify for the \$700 stipend. Please call 920-683-4183 to RSVP by February 6th.

LEARN TO WRITE YOUR OWN NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

and maximize your economic return from on and off-farm nutrient resources

QUALIFYING FARMS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A \$700 STIPEND TO ATTEND!

- You'll need soil tests results that are no more than four years old, sampled on a one-sample-per-five-acre basis, and analyzed by a DATCP-approved laboratory.
- This is a 2-Part Class. You must attend both days and turn in a completed NMP to be eligible for the stipend.



MANITOWOC COUNTY OFFICE COMPLEX ROOM 300: 4319 EXPO DRIVE, MANITOWOC

February 13th & 20th, 2026:

- **9:30am - 12:00pm** Intro to Nutrient Management, Soil Fertility, Understanding your Test Results, NPK Management, Soil Health Basics, Silurian Bedrock Standards, Meeting the 590 Standard with Chris Clark - Nutrient Management Program UW Extension Outreach Specialist, Cheyenne Behnke, SWCD Resource Conservationist, & Andrea Topper, DATCP Nutrient Management Outreach Specialist

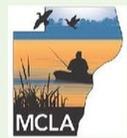
- **12:30-3:00 pm** Learn SnapPlus V3 and Complete your Nutrient Management Plan

***IF YOU ATTENDED THIS CLASS IN THE PAST 4 YEARS AND NEED HELP UPDATING YOUR PLAN TO V3, GIVE US A CALL!**

- Early Registration is strongly encouraged! Register by February 6. Space is limited.

**CALL TO REGISTER
920-683-4183**





PHRAGMITES RESTORATION EDUCATION & FIELD DAY



MARCH & JULY 2026

Join the LISMA to learn how you can control non-native (invasive) Phragmites on your own property!

The Phragmites Education Day will include presentations on:

- Species Identification
- Best practice control methods
- DATCP Licensing
- DNR Permits
- and more...

The DIY Phragmites Field Day will include an in-the-field example of how to properly handle chemicals, use equipment and treat an existing Phragmites population.



MAR 11 **PHRAGMITES EDUCATION** 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
 Neustadter Nature Center at Collins Marsh
 20021 County Road JJ, Reedsville, WI 54230

DIY PHRAGMITES FIELD DAY 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM **JULY 23**
 Manitowoc County location TBD

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

or visit https://phragmites_restoration_workshop.eventbrite.com

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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