

LAND & WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM

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LWRM Plan Requirements

- Appoint and consult with a local advisory committee
- Assess water quality and soil erosion conditions in the county
- Set local conservation goals and priorities and develop a plan to achieve priorities
- Develop a strategy to identify priority farms in the county
- Develop a strategy for meeting state performance standards using accepted practices
- Identify state and local regulations that will help to implement the plan
- Develop a strategy to provide information and education on conservation issues
- Measure progress towards meeting goals through monitoring and evaluation
- Coordinate and consult with other state, local and federal programs

Program Overview

DATCP assigns one planner to two each of eight areas in the state — usually coinciding with Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association areas — to help counties develop their land and water resource management (LWRM) plans. A DATCP approved LWRM plan is a requirement for a county to receive state funds. Plans also help to establish a coherent vision for conservation and to improve coordination between conservation partners in the county. Reporting and evaluation of soil and water conservation efforts throughout the state through the implementation of the county LWRM plans is a key component of the LWRM program. Each year, counties submit an annual accomplishment report to DATCP and DNR. This information is synthesized through a cooperative effort to produce a statewide annual report.

Challenging Areas in Plan Development

Workplan Development

Development of the multi-year workplan is one of the most important components of LWRM plan. Identify how the county will make progress toward meeting local conservation goals and priorities. At a minimum, the workplan should identify:

- Objectives and actions, including information and education activities, to meet goals
- Prioritization of goals, objectives, and/or actions
- Activities related to performance standard implementation and the priority farm strategy

- *Measurable* anticipated outcomes for at least the high priority items
- A lead agency or partner
- The timeframe for completing activities
- Proposed costs for each goal, objective or action

Helpful tips: Organize the workplan as a matrix that might include a column for each of the following related to each goal: objectives, activities, anticipated outcomes, partners, and time frame. Identification of priorities could be completed by bolding high priority items.

Challenging Areas — Continued

Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the LWRM plan, counties must include a strategy for monitoring and evaluating progress in implementing the LWRM to meet plan goals. Methods for monitoring and evaluation might include water resource monitoring, soil erosion surveys, practice installation tracking and administrative evaluation and reporting.

Helpful tips: Include monitoring and tracking systems currently in place (e.g. priority watershed projects, USGS monitoring, transect survey, volunteer stream monitoring). Other methods of quantitative monitoring and evaluation should also be incorporated. Remember to include administrative reporting and evaluation activities since these are also important to evaluating county progress (e.g. annual accomplishment reports to their land conservation committee or county board).

Priority Farm Strategy

The priority farm strategy must be systematic and should be consistent with the county resource assessment. Consider targeting farms in a specific geographic area (e.g. water quality management area or 303(d) watershed), farms with a specific resource issue (e.g. field not meeting “T”), or some other factor (e.g. farms enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program, landowners with a permit under a county ordinance). Once developed, incorporate the strategy into the performance standard implementation strategy and county work-

plan.

Helpful tip: Indicate the number of sites to be identified as a priority as a result of a systematic strategy. For example, if the county considers farms enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program as a priority, indicate how many farms have agreements and/or are under exclusive agricultural zoning.

Performance Standard Implementation Strategy

A county must communicate with DNR staff in their region and in Madison to develop a strategy to implement performance standards in the county as a part of the LWRM plan. A county should refer to the model 10-point implementation strategy when developing their county specific strategy. As a part of this strategy, incorporate compliance procedures for addressing landowner failure to implement required conservation practices (required by state or local regulation) and a process for the landowner to appeal a compliance determination. Counties must also identify whether they will handle enforcement procedures or rely on DNR.

Helpful tip: Tie the implementation strategy directly to the priority farm strategy. Farms identified as priorities would be the sites evaluated for compliance with the agricultural performance standards.



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