

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

DOOR COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

A. Mission Statement:

The Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department is created under the authority of Chapter 92 of Wisconsin Statutes. Chapter 92 gives the SWCD the responsibility for the administration of the County soil and water conservation program and the authority to exercise the powers granted to the Land Conservation Committee. The legislative declared policy of the State in Chapter 92 is to halt and reverse the depletion of the State's soil resources and pollution of its waters. The mission of conservation and environmental advocacy is the standard by which SWCD programs are developed and implemented.

B. Summary of Responsibilities:

The SWCD has a responsibility, and directive under Chapter 92, to promote land uses and programs which advance conservation and the protection of Door County's natural resources.

C. Program Summary:

Agricultural Performance Standards and Animal Waste Storage: SWCD administers Door County Code Chapter 23 which establishes minimum standards for agricultural operations to protect ground and surface water quality and permit requirements for animal waste storage facilities.

Conservation practices: SWCD uses federal, state, and local funding sources to provide technical and cost share to landowners/operators for a wide range of conservation practices to protect and improve ground and surface water quality such as buffers, grassed waterways, nutrient management, manure storage, barnyard and feed storage runoff control systems, and well abandonment.

Invasive Species: SWCD maintains a lead role in the Door County Invasive Species Team (DCIST), a collaboration of natural resource professionals, community leaders and interested citizens who seek to halt the invasion of exotic non-native plants.

Nonmetallic Mine Reclamation: SWCD administers Door County Code Chapter 36 to ensure nonmetallic mining sites will be properly reclaimed in accordance with State Administrative Code and Statutes.

Technical Assistance: SWCD maintains staff with diverse expertise in natural resources who provide technical reviews and onsite inspections of proposed projects for the Land Use Services Department as well as other technical assistance to the public.

Water Quality Protection and Improvement: SWCD works cooperatively with a variety of partners to protect and improve ground and surface water quality including identification of pollution sources at beaches (with Public Health), restoration of Dunes Lake (multiple partners), drawdown of the Forestville Millpond (with Facilities and Parks), surface water

quality monitoring (multiple partners), private well testing program (with Public Health), and watershed planning (multiple partners).

Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims: Landowners who experience wildlife damage to crops can enroll in the program to be eligible for assistance, claim payments, and/or abatement reimbursements.

Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative/Farmland Preservation Program: SWCD ensures participants in this program meet state conservation standards to remain eligible for tax credits and inspects operations once every four years.

D. Goals / Objectives Achieved in 2019:

- Secured new grants to provide cost share to install agricultural best management practices and expand invasive species program efforts.
- Developed a “9 Element Watershed Plan” for the Upper Ahnapee Watershed (approved by EPA and WDNR on 2/27/2020)
- Collaborated with Public Health and University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh to initiate a county-wide groundwater quality study and educate homeowners about the importance of testing their well water quality.
- Promoted water quality and natural resource protection through multiple programs. The following are examples of completed activities, not an exhaustive list:

2019 Accomplishments	
66	Compliance notifications under Chapter 23, Door County Code
3	Animal waste permits issued
57	Operation and maintenance inspections of installed agricultural practices
11	New agricultural practices installed (such as feed storage runoff control, manure storage, grassed waterway, well abandonment)
18	New acres of riparian buffers
95 %	Cropland acres under nutrient management plans
32	Audits of cropland fields during manure spreading
112	Miles stream corridor surveyed for priority invasive species
25	Miles of road right-of-ways surveyed for priority invasive species
140	Acres of priority invasive species controlled
50	Nonmetallic mine inspections under Chapter 36, Door County Code
24	Technical reviews for land disturbance permits
6	Streams in Kayes-Larson Watershed monitored monthly for water quality
150	Private wells sampled for bacteria and nitrate
14	Enrollments in the wildlife damage abatement program
49	Deer donated
11	Inspections for the farmland preservation program
25	Certificates of compliance issued for the farmland preservation program

E. Knowledge Sharing 2019:

- One-on-one visits with landowners and operators to identify management and conservation practices to meet minimum agricultural standards and prohibitions and go beyond to protect ground and surface water quality.
- Hosted Nutrient Management Farmer Education class to help 23 operators write their own plans covering almost 5,000 cropland acres.
- Participated with Door/Kewaunee Demonstration Farms in soil health field day and meeting with agricultural producers to prepare for challenging fall conditions.
- Outreach and education to the public about invasive species included: 248 hours of Clean Boats Clean Waters at priority boat launches, 9 educational presentations/training sessions, 4 booths at events, 131 one-on-one contacts and 364 direct mailings to landowners.
- Several educational presentations about SWCD programs and natural resource issues in Door County to a wide variety of audience ages from high school students through learning in retirement.

F. Department Budget Status

Approved 2019 Budget	\$1,277,110.00	Actual 2019 Budget	\$811,854.92
2019 Budgeted Revenue	\$822,790.00	Actual 2019 Revenue	\$378,905.91
2018 Levy Appropriation	\$454,172.00	2019 Levy Appropriation	\$454,320.00
2018 Actual Levy Appropriation	\$411,445.46	2019 Actual Levy Appropriation	\$432,949.01

Grants Used in 2019:

DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Education	\$23,352.75
DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Control	\$9,462.71
DNR PEDIP Invasive Species	\$1,795.68
DATCP Soil & Water Resource Management Grant	\$141,636.00
DATCP Land & Water Resource Management Grant	\$75,904.12
DNR Wildlife Damage Claims Program	\$19,158.68
WI Coastal Management (Invasive Species)	\$12,470.00
US Forest Service (Invasive Species)	\$11,376.68
NFWF SOGL (Invasive Species)	\$867.13
NFWF Phosphorus Reduction	\$40,133.35

Revenue from Self-funding Accounts:

Tech Support Cost-Share	\$8,012.29
Shoreland Zoning	\$1,250.00
Nonmetallic Mine Program	\$31,338.07

Donations Used in 2019:

Invasive Species Donation	\$1,004.83
Beach Pollution Revenues	\$1,035.54

Other Revenue

Copies & Postage	\$108.08
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G. Other Accomplishments: *If applicable, list other accomplishments in the past year.*

H. Issues, concerns and Restraints:

- Record amounts of precipitation delayed construction of some best management practices planned for 2019 into 2020.
- Two Conservationist positions were vacant for part of 2019. The new hires are actively being trained and advancing their skills.
- SWCD has successfully pursued grants to provide cost share to landowners and fund staff. However the short term nature of 2-3 year grants requires a continual investment of time to apply for and manage multiple programs, each with a unique set of requirements and reporting expectations.
- Program demands and natural resource protection needs continue to expand while fiscal and staffing resources remain limited.

I. Goals and Objectives for 2020:

- Build upon existing natural resource protection programs and identify new revenue sources to support them.
- Complete update, and obtain State and County approval of, the 2021-2030 Door County Land and Water Resource Management Plan.
- Continue groundwater quality study with Public Health and University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh through fall 2020. Identify funding to maintain program in 2021.
- Collaborate with partners to complete dredging project to restore Dunes Lake, a unique and sensitive coastal wetland complex.