

AGENDA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026 – 8:30 AM
LAND AND WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE
OF OCONTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
301 WASHINGTON STREET, COURTHOUSE BUILDING “A” ROOM #3041
OCONTO WI 54153
www.ocontocountywi.gov

This is an open meeting of a Standing Committee of the Oconto County Board of Supervisors. Notice of this meeting was given to the public at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting, by forwarding the complete agenda to the newspapers and to all news media who have requested the same as well as by posting. Copies of the complete agenda were available for inspection at the Office of the County Clerk and from the County's website calendar: www.ocontocountywi.gov

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - 2.1. Change of Sequence
 - 2.2. Removal of Items
- 3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Enc.)**
- 4. Review Previous Months Vendor Payments (Enc.)**
- 5. Communications**
- 6. 2025 Carry-Overs**
 - 6.1. Register of Deeds
 - 6.2. LIS/Land Records
 - 6.3. Land & Water Conservation
 - 6.4. Forest, Parks & Recreation
- 7. Extension**
 - 7.1. Department Report (No Action to be taken) (Enc.)
- 8. LIS/Land Records Department**
 - 8.1. Department Report (No Action to be taken) (Enc.)
- 9. Land & Water Conservation Department**
 - 9.1. Lake Michigan Area Conservation Association Meeting, January 9th in Brown County
 - 9.2. Resource, Conservation & Development Meeting on January 29th in Oconto County
 - 9.3. Approval of Office Furniture Purchase
 - 9.4. Department Report (No Action to be taken)
- 10. Planning & Zoning/Solid Waste Department**
 - 10.1. Update on Fox Solar, LLC filing for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. (Enc.)
 - 10.2. Update on text amendments to Zoning Ordinance regarding Recreational Vehicle/Campers. Action, if necessary. (Enc.)
 - 10.3. Legislative updates, Action, if necessary. (Enc.)
 - 10.4. Department Report (No Action to be taken) (Enc.)
- 11. Forest, Parks & Recreation Department**
 - 11.1. Little River Bridge Bid Award
 - 11.2. Department Report (Enc.)
 - 11.2.1. Recreational Officer (Enc.)
 - 11.2.2. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Liaison
- 12. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)**
- 13. Next Meeting Date**
- 14. Adjournment**

Any person wishing to attend the meeting who requires special accommodation because of a disability should contact the Oconto County Clerk's office at 920-834-6800 at least 24 hours before the meeting begins so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Persons who are members of another governmental body, but who are not members of this committee, may attend this meeting. Their attendance could result in a quorum of another governmental body being present. Such a quorum is unintended, and they are not meeting to exercise the authority, duties, or responsibilities of any other governmental body.

Courthouse Building “A” is located at the corner of Washington Street and Arbutus Avenue

c: Committee (FTP); County Administrator, Finance Director, Corporation Counsel, Department Heads, Media (via email); County Website; Central File, Official Posting Location (Physical Copy)

mls/Date Posted: 12/30/25

To responsibly serve, support and protect the people and places throughout our community.

MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025 – 8:30 AM
LAND & WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE
OF OCONTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
301 WASHINGTON STREET, COURTHOUSE BUILDING "A" ROOM #3041
OCONTO WI 54153
www.co.oconto.wi.us
(*Draft minutes, not approved by Committee*)

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Tim Cole, Mike Beyer, Keith Schneider and Wayne Kaczrowski

ABSENT: Pat Scanlan

OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Poffinbarger, GIS/LIO/LIS Administrator; Patrick Virtues, Planning, Zoning and Solid Waste Administrator; Chris Firgens, Forest, Parks & Recreation Administrator; Ken Dolata, Land & Water Conservationist; Michelle Seefeldt, Account Specialist; Al Sleeter, County Board Chair; Richard Heath, County Administrator; Beth Ellingson, Corporation Counsel; Dave Behrend, Supervisor District #8; Drew Koenigs, Assistant Parks & Recreation Administrator; Jamie Broehm, Planner; Emily Schwartz, Conservation Planner; Ryan Zahn, Recreational Officer; Scott Reuss, UW Extension Crops/Soils Educator; Vic Wozniak; Steve Heimerman, OCLAWA Roger Kuske; Ardis Kuske; Audry Kuske; and others present.

1. Call to Order

Chair Cole called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM and read the Mission Statement.

2. Approval of Agenda

2.1. Change of Sequence - None

2.2. Removal of Items – None

Moved by Beyer/Kaczrowski to approve the agenda. Motion voted on and carried.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion by Schneider/Beyer to approve the minutes of November 4, 2025. Motion voted on and carried.

4. Previous Month's Vendor Payments

The committee reviewed the previous month's vendor payments. Information only.

5. Communications

None

6. Employee Vacation Carryover

Pat Virtues and Chris Firgens brought employee vacation carryover requests to the Committee for approval. Discussion held. Rich Heath spoke on procedures. Employees are allowed to carry over one week of vacation into the next year and are encouraged to take vacation throughout the year. These requests are for over the allowed number of hours. Motion by Schneider/Beyer to approve an additional 37.5 hours of vacation carryover for Jamie Broehm. Motion voted on and carried. Motion by Beyer/Kaczrowski to approve an additional 15 hours of vacation carryover for Chris Firgens. Motion voted on and carried. Motion by Kaczrowski/Schneider to approve an additional 32.5 hours of vacation carryover for Michelle Seefeldt. Motion voted on and carried.

7. Extension

7.1. Department Report

The department reports were enclosed. Scott Reuss, UW Extension Crops/Soils Educator, spoke on the enclosed crop and soils report highlighting struggles producers are facing with nowhere to take the grain. Discussion followed. Richard Heath, County Administrator, commented that Amanda Dornfeld, Area UW-Extension Director, took a position in Oshkosh. Discussion followed on the work she has done in Oconto County and the employee changes in the department.

8. LIS/Land Records Department

8.1. Department Report

Discussion held on the enclosed department report along with highlighting the following:

- Tax bills are being printed
- Received the 2025 draft ortho photo's

9. Land & Water Conservation Department

9.1. 2025 Department of Ag, Trade & Consumer Protection Final Allocation

Ken Dolata stated that the allocations identified in this plan provide counties and others with grant funding for conservation staff and support costs, landowner cost-sharing, and runoff management projects. Oconto County Land & Water Conservation received an increase in over \$40,000.

9.2. Department Report

Ken Dolata, Land & Water Conservationist reported on the following:

- Finished the Logan Road project
- Feds are back in the office

- Reported on staff changes
 - Rachel Wilcox, Account Specialist, will be taking a full-time position with Emergency Management.
 - Mackenzie Pawlak will be a fulltime employee, shared employee between Land Conservation and Land Information. She will fill the part time Account Specialist (20 hours) position in Land Conservation and the part time Mapping Technician (20 hours) position in Land Information.
 - Emily Schwartz, Conservation Planner, will move to the Land & Water Conservation tech position once the conservation planner grant funding runs out. Ken Dolata introduced Emily Schwartz to the Committee. Emily spoke on the position's responsibilities and requirements.
 - Steve Heimerman spoke on the number of Wisconsin DNR surface water grants that were applied for. There are more applications than available funding. Grants will be awarded in late January or early February. Steve also mentioned Eurasian Milfoil has been located for the first time in Leigh and Bass Lakes.

10. Planning & Zoning/Solid Waste Department

10.1. Reconsider Renewable Energy Resolution presented by Supervisor Barkhaus. Discussion only. No action to be taken.

Zoning Administrator, Pat Virtues, reviewed the timeline of this agenda item with the committee. At the October 30, 2025 County Board meeting the board voted to send the topic of R2025-10-11 A Resolution to Enact an Ordinance Requiring Renewable Energy Companies to Obtain County Board Approval for Infrastructure Development and Maintenance back to the Land & Water Resource Committee to be reworked into a legal document and adopted R2025-10-08 Approve Attolles Law Firm Engagement Agreement. At the November 20, 2025 County Board meeting, the board directed Attorney Rebecca Roeker, Attolles Law Firm, to pursue and negotiate a JDA in cooperation with county leadership. It is the advice of legal counsel that the County not take any further action on the Proposed Ordinance. Discussion followed. No action was taken.

10.2. Update on Fox Solar, LLC filing for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) Action, if necessary

Patrick Virtues stated that in an attempt to keep everyone updated, this will be an agenda item for some time and directed everyone to Fox Solar, LLC's website if they want immediate up to date information. Discussion held.

10.3. Update on Recycling Contract Renewals. Action, if necessary.

Patrick Virtues presented contract renewals for Rock Oil and Logistics Recycling. Motion by Beyer/Kaczrowski to approve the contract with Rock Oil. Motion voted on and carried. Motion by Kaczrowski/Schneider to approve the contract with Logistics Recycling. Motion voted on and carried.

10.4. Update on text amendments to Zoning Ordinance regarding Recreational Vehicle/Campers. Action, if necessary.

Pat Virtues reviewed the recommended text amendment changes to the Zoning Ordinance received from the towns. Discussion held on the town comments and consider changing the restrictions from R1, R2 and R3 to a minimum lot size requirement, if possible. Rich Heath, County Administrator, spoke on the importance of the County Board supporting the ordinances passed. Public comment taken from the floor with each speaker having two minutes. The Committee directed the Planning, Zoning & Solid Waste Administrator to make revisions to the text from the town comments and bring back to Committee for further review.

10.5. Discuss Comprehensive Planning & Rezone Application process & procedures,

Pat Virtues stated this was placed on the agenda after comments made about the rezone process was lengthy and cumbersome. Discussion held on the rezone process involving town recommendations. The process will remain as is.

10.6. Review Preliminary County Plat- Caliber Estates-Town of Little Suamico. Action, if necessary

Patrick Virtues presented the preliminary County Plat-Caliber Estates Town of Little Suamico to the Committee for review. Discussion held on wetlands, DNR review of the roads and soils along with Outlot #1, north of the proposed road. Pat commented that the survey review letter recommended the removal of Outlot #1. Motion by Beyer/Kaczrowski to approve the preliminary County Plat-Caliber Estates, Town of Little Suamico pending the Planning and Zoning/Solid Waste Administrator and County Surveyor approvals once corrections have been made. Motion voted on and carried.

10.7. Department Report

Discussion held on the enclosed department report along with highlighting the following:

- The VanHunk rezone hearing current status
- 2026 Recycling guides are being finalized and will be provided to the municipalities.

11. Forest, Parks & Recreation Department

11.1. Chute Pond Pavilion Rental

11.1.1. Friends of the Mountain Fire Department

11.1.2. NEW Near North Club – Larry Deau Memorial Kids Fish-A-Ree

Chris Frgens stated fees to rent the Chute Pond Pavilion were set at the November meeting but requests to waive fees needed Committee approval. The department received requests to waive pavilion rental fees from

Friends of the Mountain Fire Department for the Fisheree on Saturday, February 7, 2026 and NEW Near North Club for the Larry Deau Memorial Kids Fish-A-Ree on Saturday, February 28, 2026. Discussion held. Motion by Schneider/Kaczrowski to waive the Chute Pond pavilion rental fee Friends of the Mountain Fire Department and NEW Near North Club for the dates mentioned above. Motion voted on and carried.

11.2. 2006-2030 Snowmobile Friendly Community Application Support

Chris Firlens stated that Debra Uhlenbrauck, President of the Chute Pond Snowmobile Club, Secretary/Treasurer of the Oconto County Snowmobile Alliance and AWSC director for Oconto County, would like to apply for the Snowmobile Friendly Community Award for Oconto County. The Snowmobile Friendly Community Program presents a Snowmobile Friendly Community Award as a positive advocacy tool to promote the mission statement of the AWSC to promote safe and responsible snowmobiling. Both the community partners as well as the snowmobile clubs gain marketing abilities to promote tourism and trails in their specific community. Motion by Kaczrowski/Schneider to forward a resolution to County Board supporting the 2026-2030 Snowmobile Friendly Community Application submitted by Debra Uhlenbrauck for Oconto County. Motion voted on and carried.

11.3. Capital Equipment Purchase

Chris Firlens stated he would like to purchase a utility vehicle for North Bay Shore Campground and is looking to purchase a John Deere Gator. Discussion held on type of vehicle. Motion by Beyer/Kaczrowski to take the request to purchase a utility vehicle for North Bay Shore to County Board for approval and to place it on the consent agenda. Motion voted on and carried.

11.4. 2026 Forest & Parks Work Plan

Chris Firlens presented the 2026 Forest, Parks & Recreation Work Plan. Discussion held. Motion by Beyer/Schneider moved to take the 2026 Forest, Parks & Recreation Plan to County Board for approval. Motion voted on and carried

11.5. Department Report

Discussion held on the enclosed department report along with highlighting the following:

- There is only one active timber sale. Discussion on timber sales and timber sale revenue.
- The Chute Pond Dam fence project is complete.
- Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant has been submitted for the Birr property in the Town of Morgan.
- Awarded a grant for the Butler Rocks Parking Lot
- Discussion on the North Bay Shore harbor dredge and expansion. Hope to have the project complete by the fall of 2026.

1.1.1. Recreational Officer

1.1.2. Discussion held on the enclosed department report along with winter ATAV use of the trails.

1.1.3. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Liaison

Discussion held on the enclosed department report.

10. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)

- Rich Heath mentioned that an email was sent out to all supervisors on the strategic planning process. Encouraged the Committee to complete the survey.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be January 6, 2026. In addition, the 2026 County Board and Committee Calendar was reviewed with a discussion on the September meeting. The committee is in favor of changing the September meeting to September 1, 2026.

12. Adjournment

Chair Cole declared the meeting adjourned at 10:48 AM.

MS/Date Posted – 12/09/2025

12/30/2025 08:59 AM

User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO

POST DATES 12/01/2025 - 12/31/2025

BOTH JOURNALIZED AND UNJOURNALIZED

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UW EXTENSION

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE	AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 9479 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC			
BANK CODE: 01			
17WM-4YM6-9R4P	ACCT A35MAFMFZ5YMWY	69.04	12/19/2025
17H6-RPWY-FWVP	ACCT A35MAFMFZ5YMWY	69.78	
1LT3-T74D-7J4M	ACCT A35MAFMFZ5YMWY	17.99	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		156.81	
TOTAL VENDOR 9479 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC		156.81	
GRAND TOTAL:		156.81	

12/30/2025 09:09 AM
User: lwrmiche
DB: Oconto

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LAND CONSERVATION

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 0621 LUMBERJACK RC&D INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
1802	TIP HOURS	268.00 12/26/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	268.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 0621 LUMBERJACK RC&D INC	268.00
VENDOR CODE: 1256 UW-STEVENS POINT EXTENSION		
BANK CODE: 01		
CIV-00041470	LAKES PROJECT GRANT 17	511.18 12/19/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	511.18
	TOTAL VENDOR 1256 UW-STEVENS POINT EXTENSION	511.18
VENDOR CODE: 1632 WINDUS, ROBERT		
BANK CODE: 01		
121625	CAMP REGISTRATION REIMBURSEMENT 6/15/25-	150.00 12/19/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	150.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 1632 WINDUS, ROBERT	150.00
VENDOR CODE: 1747 BASS LAKE ASSOC./WAYNE WYNGAARD		
BANK CODE: 01		
120425	HEALTHY WATERS COST SHARE PROGRAM	1,401.00 12/12/2025
120825	SWRM GRANT PAYMENT	8,925.00 12/12/2025
12/04/25	COUNTY C/S PARTIAL PAYMENT	500.00 12/12/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	10,826.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 1747 MCDOWELL, JOSEPH	10,826.00
VENDOR CODE: 8968 CENTURYLINK - BUSINESS SERVICES		
BANK CODE: 01		
760663454	ACCT 91136973	634.29 12/05/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	634.29
	TOTAL VENDOR 8968 CENTURYLINK - BUSINESS SERVICES	634.29
VENDOR CODE: 9410 TILTH AGRONOMY		
BANK CODE: 01		
PYMNT 19	DEMO FARMS	11,075.91 12/05/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	11,075.91
	TOTAL VENDOR 9410 TILTH AGRONOMY	11,075.91
GRAND TOTAL:		23,465.38

12/30/2025 09:07 AM

User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO

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BOTH JOURNALIZED AND UNJOURNALIZED

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LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 1369 WI DEPT OF ADMINISTRATION		
BANK CODE: 01		
11-2025	LAND RECORDS FEES	4,634.00 12/12/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	4,634.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 1369 WI DEPT OF ADMINISTRATION	4,634.00
VENDOR CODE: 3913 RUEKERT & MIELKE, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
160769	SERVICES FROM 11-1-25 THROUGH 11-28-25	9,435.00 12/12/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	9,435.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 3913 RUEKERT & MIELKE, INC	9,435.00
GRAND TOTAL:		14,069.00

12/30/2025 09:06 AM

User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO

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BOTH JOURNALIZED AND UNJOURNALIZED

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LWR

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 9479	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC	
BANK CODE: 01		
1DLF-1PW3-PL9H	ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY	695.74
1MR6-JRHY-PDVX	ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY	16.61
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		712.35
TOTAL VENDOR 9479	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC	712.35
VENDOR CODE: 9785	GANNETT WISCONSIN LOCALIQ	
BANK CODE: 01		
0007416182	ACCOUNT # 1013227	273.70 12/05/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		273.70
TOTAL VENDOR 9785	GANNETT WISCONSIN LOCALIQ	273.70
GRAND TOTAL:		986.05

12/30/2025 09:10 AM

User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

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PLANNING & ZONING

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 1632 STANISLAW OR LAURA KOMPERDA		
BANK CODE: 01		
12-2025	REZONE WITHDRAWN REFUND	475.00 12/12/2025
	TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	475.00
	TOTAL VENDOR 1632 STANISLAW OR LAURA KOMPERDA	475.00
GRAND TOTAL:		475.00

12/30/2025 09:12 AM
User: lwrmiche
DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO
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RECYCLING

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 0579	LOGISTICS RECYCLING INC.	
BANK CODE: 01		
151398	OCONTO FALLS - NOV 2025	425.25 12/19/2025
150687-REV	LRI- TOWN OF LITTLE SUAMICO	1,340.36 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		1,765.61
TOTAL VENDOR 0579	LOGISTICS RECYCLING INC.	1,765.61
VENDOR CODE: 1441	WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORP	
BANK CODE: 01		
5749627796	ACCOUNT # 0404783730-00001	1,310.55 12/26/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		1,310.55
TOTAL VENDOR 1441	WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORP	1,310.55
VENDOR CODE: 3039	BROWN CO PORT & RESOURCE RECOVERY	
BANK CODE: 01		
62397	ACCOUNT # 1107	2,501.39 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		2,501.39
TOTAL VENDOR 3039	BROWN CO PORT & RESOURCE RECOVERY	2,501.39
VENDOR CODE: 8526	MIKEY SMET AUTO SALVAGE	
BANK CODE: 01		
11-2025	FREON DISPOSAL	640.00 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		640.00
TOTAL VENDOR 8526	MIKEY SMET AUTO SALVAGE	640.00
VENDOR CODE: 8917	LIBERTY TIRE SERVICES LLC	
BANK CODE: 01		
3126087	TOWN OF MORGAN TIRE PICKUP	92.80 12/19/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		92.80
TOTAL VENDOR 8917	LIBERTY TIRE SERVICES LLC	92.80
VENDOR CODE: 9345	GFL ENVIRONMENTAL	
BANK CODE: 01		
U60000310399	ACCOUNT # U6-16486	10,023.03 12/26/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		10,023.03
TOTAL VENDOR 9345	GFL ENVIRONMENTAL	10,023.03
GRAND TOTAL:		16,333.38

12/30/2025 09:14 AM
User: lwrmiche
DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO
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FOREST, PARKS & RECREATION

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 0127 BAY IMPRESSIONS LTD		
BANK CODE: 01		
31037 BOAT LAUNCH PASSES	663.60 12/12/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	663.60	
TOTAL VENDOR 0127 BAY IMPRESSIONS LTD	663.60	
VENDOR CODE: 0170 BOEHMERS ACE HARDWARE		
BANK CODE: 01		
0170-NOV 2025 ACCT #15004	446.06 12/12/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	446.06	
TOTAL VENDOR 0170 BOEHMERS ACE HARDWARE	446.06	
VENDOR CODE: 0184 TOWN OF BRAZEAU-TREASURER		
BANK CODE: 01		
461421 2025 LAKE DISTRICT FEE - PARCEL #008-471	59.17 12/19/2025	
462026 2025 LAKE DISTRICT FEE - PARCEL #008-592	59.47 12/19/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	118.64	
TOTAL VENDOR 0184 TOWN OF BRAZEAU-TREASURER	118.64	
VENDOR CODE: 0419 GILLETT SNO-RIDERS, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
0419-5911.2 2025-2026 ATV/UTV TRAIL MAINTENANCE	1,706.25 12/05/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	1,706.25	
TOTAL VENDOR 0419 GILLETT SNO-RIDERS, INC	1,706.25	
VENDOR CODE: 0816 OCONTO ELECTRIC COOP		
BANK CODE: 01		
961400-NOV 2025 ACCT #961400 - 5277 COUNTY ROAD BB	50.48	
20982357-NOV 2025 ACCT #662801 - 5752 LANDING LANE	78.54	
85654072-NOV 2025 ACCT #1305100 - 3490 GARRITY RD	59.89	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	188.91	
TOTAL VENDOR 0816 OCONTO ELECTRIC COOP	188.91	
VENDOR CODE: 10081 COLLINS ENGINEERS INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
59216 PROJECT 60-17086.01 LITTLE RIVER BRIDGE	27,900.07 12/12/2025	
59331 PROJECT #60-17086.01 LITTLE RIVER BRIDGE	7,610.30 12/12/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	35,510.37	
TOTAL VENDOR 10081 COLLINS ENGINEERS INC	35,510.37	
VENDOR CODE: 10109 DUBS CONCRETE AND CONSTRUCTION LLC		
BANK CODE: 01		
1890 CONCRETE PADS	4,416.00 12/05/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	4,416.00	
TOTAL VENDOR 10109 DUBS CONCRETE AND CONSTRUCTION I	4,416.00	
VENDOR CODE: 1251 UNITED TRUE VALUE		
BANK CODE: 01		
3437900105 ACCT #875	9.20 12/19/2025	
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01	9.20	
TOTAL VENDOR 1251 UNITED TRUE VALUE	9.20	
VENDOR CODE: 1441 WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORP		
BANK CODE: 01		
5727412323 040772253-7 CHUTE POND/NBS/BOAT LAUNCH E	1,759.34 12/12/2025	
5719050748 0402484363-00010 - 4191 OLD STATE RD	18.46 12/05/2025	

12/30/2025 09:14 AM

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO
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 BOTH JOURNALIZED AND UNJOURNALIZED
 BOTH OPEN AND PAID

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INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 1441 WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORP		
BANK CODE: 01		
5719340946	0403950122-00001 - D.E. HALL 7840 COUNT	23.03 12/05/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		1,800.83
TOTAL VENDOR 1441 WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORP		1,800.83
VENDOR CODE: 3266 PENSAUKEE SANITARY DISTRICT #1		
BANK CODE: 01		
22115	3074 FISH HOUSE - PENSAUKEE BOAT LANDING	192.00 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		192.00
TOTAL VENDOR 3266 PENSAUKEE SANITARY DISTRICT #1		192.00
VENDOR CODE: 4441 MENARDS - MARINETTE		
BANK CODE: 01		
31467	ACCT #31620470	831.54
31526	ACCT #31620470	269.74
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		1,101.28
TOTAL VENDOR 4441 MENARDS - MARINETTE		1,101.28
VENDOR CODE: 6115 NSIGHT TELSERVICES		
BANK CODE: 01		
6115-DEC 2025	ACCT # 41669100 - MSR INTERNET SERVICE	70.90 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		70.90
TOTAL VENDOR 6115 NSIGHT TELSERVICES		70.90
VENDOR CODE: 7328 BUREAU OF CORRECTIONAL ENTERPRISES		
BANK CODE: 01		
924-004358	CUST #94207	10,651.54 12/19/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		10,651.54
TOTAL VENDOR 7328 BUREAU OF CORRECTIONAL ENTERPRISE		10,651.54
VENDOR CODE: 7788 MENARDS-DEPERE		
BANK CODE: 01		
55904	ACCT #32810347	410.44
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		410.44
TOTAL VENDOR 7788 MENARDS-DEPERE		410.44
VENDOR CODE: 7874 MENARDS HOWARD		
BANK CODE: 01		
23445	ACCT #32940256	703.57
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		703.57
TOTAL VENDOR 7874 MENARDS HOWARD		703.57
VENDOR CODE: 8428 HIDDEN BEAR TRAIL ATV CLUB		
BANK CODE: 01		
8428	2025-2026 ATV/UTV TRAIL MAINTENANCE	4,500.00
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		4,500.00
TOTAL VENDOR 8428 HIDDEN BEAR TRAIL ATV CLUB		4,500.00
VENDOR CODE: 8538 WIRTZ SEPTIC PUMPING, LLC		
BANK CODE: 01		
8538-2025	2025 CHUTE POND/NBS/ FISH CLEANING STATI	16,305.00 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		16,305.00

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User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO

POST DATES 12/01/2025 - 01/02/2026

BOTH JOURNALIZED AND UNJOURNALIZED

BOTH OPEN AND PAID

Page: 3/4

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 8538 WIRTZ SEPTIC PUMPING, LLC		
TOTAL VENDOR 8538 WIRTZ SEPTIC PUMPING, LLC		16,305.00
VENDOR CODE: 8639 CUSTOM MANUFACTURING, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
6170 PICNIC TABLE FRAMES		6,380.00 12/19/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		6,380.00
TOTAL VENDOR 8639 CUSTOM MANUFACTURING, INC		6,380.00
VENDOR CODE: 9296 PACIFIC PARKING SYSTEMS, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
17460 SALES ORDER #25650-A		320.00 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		320.00
TOTAL VENDOR 9296 PACIFIC PARKING SYSTEMS, INC		320.00
VENDOR CODE: 9345 GFL ENVIRONMENTAL		
BANK CODE: 01		
U60000307011 U6-22456 - FOREST/CAMPGROUNDS GARBAGE DI		60.50 12/05/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		60.50
TOTAL VENDOR 9345 GFL ENVIRONMENTAL		60.50
VENDOR CODE: 9349 THE CROOKED TRAILS ATV CLUB, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
9349-5911.2 2025-2026 ATV/UTV TRAIL MAINTENANCE		1,089.25 12/05/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		1,089.25
TOTAL VENDOR 9349 THE CROOKED TRAILS ATV CLUB, INC		1,089.25
VENDOR CODE: 9479 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC		
BANK CODE: 01		
+19XY-NC7W-41PP ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY		3,847.50 12/05/2025
1JDN-FXHK-K6WJ ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY		4,588.50 12/19/2025
1M3C-JMFT-QR7M ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY		81.63
1TMY-J7XG-VL69 ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY		414.88
1634-46P6-D3PX ACCT # A35MAFMFZ5YMWY		216.12
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		9,148.63
TOTAL VENDOR 9479 AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC		9,148.63
VENDOR CODE: 9549 MOUNTAIN STONE WORKS, LLC		
BANK CODE: 01		
13427 ACCT #135		15,084.93 12/12/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		15,084.93
TOTAL VENDOR 9549 MOUNTAIN STONE WORKS, LLC		15,084.93
VENDOR CODE: 9598 NKS TIRE & SERVICE		
BANK CODE: 01		
251822 ORIGINAL ESTIMATE #347177		2,029.64 12/05/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		2,029.64
TOTAL VENDOR 9598 NKS TIRE & SERVICE		2,029.64
VENDOR CODE: 9698 BRICKYARD CONTRACTS		
BANK CODE: 01		
INV0001 REMOVAL OF 16 TREES AND 5 STUMPS		4,500.00 12/19/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		4,500.00
TOTAL VENDOR 9698 BRICKYARD CONTRACTS		4,500.00
VENDOR CODE: 9785 GANNETT WISCONSIN LOCALIQ		

12/30/2025 09:14 AM

User: lwrmiche

DB: Oconto

CUSTOM INVOICE REPORT FOR COUNTY OF OCONTO

POST DATES 12/01/2025 - 01/02/2026

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BOTH OPEN AND PAID

Page: 4/4

INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE AMOUNT PAID
VENDOR CODE: 9785 GANNETT WISCONSIN LOCALIQ		
BANK CODE: 01		
7416087 ACCT #1007926		35.40 12/19/2025
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		35.40
TOTAL VENDOR 9785 GANNETT WISCONSIN LOCALIQ		35.40
VENDOR CODE: 9822 ABRASIVE SOLUTIONS, LLC		
BANK CODE: 01		
7403 SANDBLAST PREP OF TREE PLANTERS		800.00
TOTAL BANK CODE: 01		800.00
TOTAL VENDOR 9822 ABRASIVE SOLUTIONS, LLC		800.00
GRAND TOTAL:		118,242.94



OCONTO COUNTY
REQUEST FOR ACCOUNT CARRY-OVER | Form 204

TO: OCONTO COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: December 15, 2025

FROM DEPARTMENT: Register of Deeds

ACCOUNT NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	\$/NOT TO EXCEED	REASON
Carry-over funds	100-18-51711-59998	\$2,668.78	For real estate/vital records/scanning needs

SUBMITTED BY (DEPARTMENT HEAD): Laurie Wusterbarth

HOME COMMITTEE APPROVED DATE: January 6, 2026

RECEIVED BY FINANCE DEPARTMENT:

FINANCE COMMITTEE: APPROVED _____ NOT APPROVED _____

NOTE: SUBMIT THIS REQUEST FORM TO THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT BEFORE JANUARY 31

OCONTO COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

LAURIE WUSTERBARTH

301 WASHINGTON STREET

OCONTO WI 54153-1699

laurie.wusterbARTH@co.oconto.wi.us

TELEPHONE: 920-834-7114



Land & Water Resources Committee

RE: Carryover of Account #100-18-51711-59998

The Register of Deeds Office is requesting to carry over a balance of \$2,668.78 in the SSN Redaction Project Account, which is to be used for real estate and/or vital records needs.

This account was created to hold funds generated by Wisconsin Act 314 in 2010, which was passed to change the recording fee from \$11 for the first page and \$2 for each additional page to a flat fee of \$25 per document. Act 314 also required the Register of Deeds offices to make a reasonable effort to redact social security numbers from real estate documents that are viewable and accessible on the internet.

In order to assist with the redaction process, the legislation imposed an additional \$5 fee per document, and that is the money that has gone into this account. These funds are to be used for things associated with the redaction process, so the money has been carried over for a number of years.

In January of 2025 the balance in this account was \$5,468.78. Due to the imaging move from IMS21 to Laserfiche, \$2,800.00 was paid to TriMin Systems, Inc. in July of 2025 for an integration of instrument codes into our software program, therefore the remaining balance is \$2,668.78.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie WusterbARTH".

Laurie WusterbARTH
Oconto County Register of Deeds



OCONTO COUNTY
REQUEST FOR ACCOUNT CARRY-OVER | Form 204

TO: OCONTO COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: _____

FROM DEPARTMENT: _____

ACCOUNT NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	\$/NOT TO EXCEED	REASON

SUBMITTED BY (DEPARTMENT HEAD): _____

HOME COMMITTEE APPROVED DATE: _____

RECEIVED BY FINANCE DEPARTMENT: _____

FINANCE COMMITTEE: APPROVED _____ NOT APPROVED _____

NOTE: SUBMIT THIS REQUEST FORM TO THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT BEFORE JANUARY 31

Agriculture-Crops and Soils

Author: Scott Reuss

Research & Demonstration Projects: Physical work for all research efforts completed for the year. It was challenging getting the last site of corn nitrogen rate and cover crop interaction completed due to timing and weather patterns causing delays in shelling the harvested corn. Data analysis will conclude soon and will then focus on sharing the results and potential management implications with farms and ag professionals. Two of the corn sites were hand harvested and shelled (electric sheller). Very valuable effort and results, but did take about 3 weeks of effort between the two sites' work and assisting with National Corn Grower Association yield plots at multiple locations.

Local/Regional Educational Programming: Individual questions form a large part of all educational contacts and Reuss strives to be known as a sound resource for farms, citizens, and agribusinesses.

- Pesticide Applicator Training. First session of the season held in Antigo on Dec. 19. Small year for PAT numbers as 5 years ago was COVID year during which DATCP extended everyone's certification for a free year. Two other trainings will be held in the region, Feb. 4 in Lena and March 17 in Shawano.
- Farmland Renting Workshop series conducted Dec. 9 – 12. One workshop was held in each of the four counties, with Oconto Falls site on Dec. 12. 20 persons attended the live sessions, but have already sent out 5 packets of the materials and two sites have also distributed materials packets.
- Badger Crop Update held in Appleton on Dec. 4. Attendees were able to interact with many state-wide specialists and see impacts of current research and upcoming changes to management recommendations. The session was live broadcast state-wide via Zoom, thus total attendees were about 110. Reuss served as emcee for the day and had assisted with the planning efforts.
- Shawano County Nutrient Management Plan Development Workshop held Dec. 8. Assisted their Land Conservation staff, UW Nutrient & Pest Management staff, and DATCP NM coordinator to help the 16 attendees complete NM plans for 2026 cropping.
- Participated in an agriculture panel discussion for the Shawano Leadership Training program.

Upcoming Events:

- Invited to present Nitrogen research results and implications on nitrogen management at Seed Concepts' (Private agronomic service provider) winter workshop in Green Bay on Feb. 5.
- Focus on Forage webinar series taking place Thursdays in February, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Free series offering new research and management implications for forage producers.
- Northeast Regional Nitrogen Management Workshop occurring Monday, Feb. 23 in Appleton. Combination of Extension and Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program efforts to bring best management practice discussion and new research results to farms in the region.
- Marinette & Oconto Counties' Nutrient Management Plan Development Workshop days will be late Feb/early March.
- Langlade County Landowner & Farm Workshop scheduled for Friday, April 10 @ Resource Center.
- Other crop management workshops will be scheduled and held throughout the region January through March.

Agriculture

Authors: *Alicia Utke-Becher, Angie Ulness, Anne Pfeiffer, Carolina Pinzon-Sanchez, Daniel Smith, Heather Schlesser, Jerry Clark, Joshua Kamps, Katelyn Goldsmith, Katie Daul, Kevin Jarek, Liz Gartman, Megan Sankey, Melissa Ohlrich, Nesli Akdeniz Onuki, Stephanie Bowers, Stephanie Plaster, Will Fulwider*

COMET™ (Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory) training for agricultural service professionals, farmers, and rural community members to learn active listening skills to offer caring conversations as a support to people in a vulnerable space and before they are in a mental health crisis. The goal is to encourage the farming and rural communities to activate their noticing skills and to be better prepared to support each other through caring conversations to rebuild community connections. Total Reach: 6 participants from 6 different counties.

- “Farmers don’t play cards anymore” is something a farmwoman said in response to a question about why she attended an Extension workshop series for women farmers. She continued, saying that in years past, the neighborhood farm families would gather on Saturday nights to play cards. Now there might be only one working farm on a long stretch of road and it is not as easy to connect with others who are experiencing similar situations. One of the first signs of stress we often see in the farming community is when individuals or families stop attending meetings, religious activities or stop showing up at the gas station or feed mill for the morning coffee klatch. There are a handful of curricula that address suicide prevention, such as Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR), and SafeTALK. These are specific to support those with suicidal thoughts and in crisis. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) offers a broader curriculum that includes active listening and listening nonjudgmentally; however, it is an 8-hour course. There is still stigma in rural and farming communities around suicide. The specific topic and intensity of suicide prevention trainings may be a barrier for rural community members. MHFA’s time commitment along with stigma may also deter busy farmers and agricultural professionals from participating. Multiple challenges are facing rural communities in accessing mental health. Existing resources and training often focus on crisis needs and immediate suicide risk. However, many people suffer from distress and moderate depression or anxiety that can significantly impact their health and well-being. COMET™ fills that gap in resources for people in this vulnerable space with caring conversations and aims to prevent crisis. COMET™ is a short, two-hour program designed by the High Plains Research Network (HPRN) in Eastern Colorado and offered by UW – Madison Division of Extension educators for the agricultural and rural communities in Wisconsin. The program is a gentle introduction to supporting friends and neighbors with caring conversations to help them shift their mental health trajectory back to a place of wellness and away from the path of a mental health crisis. UW-Madison Division of Extension partners with the Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program’s Farm Well Wisconsin staff (SWCAP) to offer this training to rural and agricultural communities throughout Wisconsin. Rural communities and farm families value supporting each other in times of need. COMET™ helps people take the next step after noticing someone might be struggling. It empowers friends and neighbors to be more prepared to support each other through caring conversations. The training offers seven questions to guide a conversation, so it feels natural with a beginning, middle, and the important graceful, supportive exit. 6 participants were trained with COMET to improve their active listening skills and their confidence in engaging in a caring conversation to support someone’s mental health. [To Be Updated when data from Colorado arrives. Pre/Post evaluations indicate that participants are more likely to (xxx point improvement) invite family or friends to tell them more about a potentially emotional situation. On a scale of 1-



10 with 1= not likely and 10 very likely, the average score was xx on how likely they were to use COMET in the next 3 months.]

Planning and preparation for a field day focused on the use of Automatic Milking Systems (AMS) for dairy producers and ag professionals where participants will increase their AMS related knowledge through facility tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning. The goal of this effort is to help farmers make informed, strategic, and economically viable decisions regarding AMS adoption and use. (Location type: Home Office) Total Reach: Total attendance is unknown at the time of reporting.

- The adoption of automatic milking systems (AMS) has steadily increased since their introduction. Successful AMS adoption and use requires careful planning and management by farmers regarding all aspects of their farming operation and lifestyle. Currently there is a lack of publicly available, non-commercial educational opportunities for farmers and ag professionals to learn about the considerations of AMS adoption and use. To address this current gap, a team of Extension professionals are developing and organizing a field day focused on AMS adoption and use. Participants will learn about AMS adoption and use through facility tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning. The goal of this effort is to help farmers make informed, strategic, and economically viable decisions regarding AMS adoption and use. An AMS focused field day will be held that includes farm tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

Health and Well-Being

Author: Sarah Schindel

Communication, planning and presentation to St. John's Lutheran Church in Morgan to inform the church council of benefits of community based physical activity programs such as Strong Bodies. Due to the successful conversation, the Strong Bodies program will commence in February 2026 at this location, targeting residents of southern Oconto County.

Communication, planning and budget considerations for implementation of "Teen Cuisine" curriculum within the newly formed Oconto Unified School District After School Program. The Teen Cuisine curriculum addresses key concepts about nutrition, food preparation and cooking, food safety, and physical activity using approaches and strategies that enhance learning and behavior change among teens. 76.4% of teens who completed the program reported changes in food choices, 80.9% improved knife skills and exhibited increased comfort when using a knife, 74.1% accurately used recipes when cooking and 84% cooked more. These are crucial skills for at-risk youth and teens who may not have access to learning these skills otherwise. Long term, these skills can lead to positive eating patterns and better health.

Participation in forming a partnership between Oconto County Health and Wellbeing Educator, Oconto and Marinette County 4-H Educators and "Lasagna Love" whose mission it is to feed families, spread kindness, and strengthen communities. The intent behind the HWB educator in this partnership is to provide Oconto County 4-H youth with food prep and nutrition lessons within the 4-H community service model.

Preparation for and attendance at a "Deliberative Inquiry" training on facilitating public deliberation that focuses on 1. Moderating & Organizing Deliberative Events, 2. Naming & Framing Complex Issues and 3. Moving Toward Responsible Action and Naming and Framing for Public Deliberation. This three part Deliberative Inquiry training is provided by the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) and UW-Madison Division of Extension's Health and Well-Being Institute at the UW Center for Civic Engagement at UW Stevens Point Wausau Campus. The goal is to expand my individual training, capacity, and professional development in order to increase the public deliberation methods available for coalition and community-based work in Oconto County.



- Oconto County communities are facing increasingly complex and interconnected challenges related to health and wellbeing, aging, workforce development, natural resources, and community resilience. Local leaders, organizations, and residents are often called upon to engage in conversations and decision-making processes that involve diverse perspectives, competing priorities, and deeply held values. While community members care deeply about their county and want to contribute positively, many lack shared tools and skills for navigating difficult conversations, listening across differences, and collaboratively exploring solutions. As community issues grow more complex, traditional approaches to public meetings and engagement are often insufficient, sometimes resulting in disengagement, misunderstanding, or polarized discussions. There is a clear need for structured, inclusive approaches that promote thoughtful dialogue, mutual understanding, and informed decision-making. The Deliberative Inquiry training focused on three main areas: (1) naming and framing complex issues to improve the quality of civil discourse, (2) organizing and facilitating deliberative dialogue events, and (3) using the results of deliberation to move towards responsible community action. This training provided valuable templates, practice, and methodology for respectful and productive public discourse around key issues in the community, which is crucial when working in coalitions and doing community-based work. A Deliberative Inquiry training course builds local capacity by equipping Extension staff, community leaders, and partners with practical facilitation skills to guide respectful, productive conversations. This training supports Extension's role as a trusted, neutral convener and strengthens Oconto County's ability to address local issues through inclusive, community-driven processes that lead to sustainable solutions.

A project to increase physical activity spearheaded by UW Extension in partnership with HOC's Health and Wellbeing Community Action Work Group, to implement a walking program duplicative in all communities across Oconto County, for adults to increase physical activity, gain access to county wide health and wellbeing resources and increase social connection over the winter.

- The data show that approximately 20 % of adults in Oconto County reported participating in no physical activity outside of work (data years 2022 & 2020) . In addition, only about 60 % of residents live close to a park or recreation facility (compared to 85% average state and national), which suggests an access gap for many in the community. Obesity is also a notable concern in the county: about 40% of adults are considered obese as well as 53.4% of the population reporting either living with diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke or coronary heart disease. This data highlights that a substantial portion of the adult population is physically inactive — which elevates even further risks for conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and premature mortality. (The measure "physical inactivity" is defined as adults age 18+ reporting no leisure-time physical activity.) In response, the CHIP/CHA Health and Wellbeing Community Action Workgroup, with guidance and leadership of UW Extension educators, launched the Oconto County "Walk&Talk", based off a FOODWISE Walking Program model, designed to increase opportunities for daily physical activity and reduce health inequities across the county. Beginning in mid 2025, the subgroup held a series of planning meetings to map and evaluate potential walking routes throughout Oconto County. These meetings included representation from Oconto County HHS, Bellin/Emplify Health and UW- Extension Oconto County. As planning progressed, the group made a key decision to partner with every high school in Oconto County—including Oconto, Oconto Falls, Lena, Gillett and Suring High Schools—to make walking locations more accessible to youth, families, and surrounding neighborhoods. These partnerships enable use of existing school facilities outside of school hours and they support us in efforts to provide infrastructure such as lighting, signage, and sidewalks to ensure routes are safe, well-lit, and inviting. Through this coordinated, countywide approach, the walking program aims to: Increase the proportion of adults engaging in regular physical activity and reduce the 20% inactivity rate; Enhance equitable access to safe walking environments, particularly in rural and underserved areas; Foster intergenerational participation through school partnerships and community walking groups; Strengthen social



connectedness while promoting mental and physical well-being. Early indicators—such as increased participation in walking groups, school-community engagement, and expanded use of existing facilities—demonstrate promising momentum. By uniting stakeholders around a shared goal, UW Extension, in partnership with Healthy Oconto County, is making measurable strides toward improving health outcomes, reducing disparities, and building a culture of active living for all residents.

A collaborative team of UW–Madison Division of Extension educators partnered across counties to design and begin implementation of a Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) evaluation focused on understanding the impacts of garden-based programming across diverse Wisconsin communities. This effort was intentionally structured to include both rural and metropolitan counties and to explore differences in community context, as well as changes in garden impacts before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Garden-based programs across Wisconsin play an important role in supporting food access, health, wellbeing, and community connection; however, the full scope of their impacts—particularly how those impacts differ between rural and metropolitan communities—has not been consistently documented. Additionally, many gardens experienced shifts in purpose, participation, and use during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, creating a need to better understand both intended and unintended changes over time. To address this gap, a team of UW–Madison Division of Extension educators from multiple counties, initiated by Brown County Community Development Educator, spearheaded a collaborative evaluation effort using Ripple Effect Mapping (REM). The team intentionally identified four to five garden sites across diverse geographic and community contexts to explore variations in impact related to place, population density, and access to resources, as well as differences in garden roles before and after COVID-19. This situation underscores the need for continued collaborative evaluation to capture the complex and evolving impacts of garden-based programming. By working together across counties and disciplines, Extension educators are building the foundation needed to generate actionable insights, strengthen program decision-making, and better respond to the unique needs of rural and metropolitan communities moving forward. At the time of reporting, Ripple Effect Mapping has been completed at two of the garden sites, with additional sessions being planned. Because the evaluation is ongoing, definitive conclusions have not yet been drawn. However, the collaborative planning process has highlighted the importance of shared evaluation design, consistent facilitation approaches, and cross-county coordination to ensure meaningful and comparable data collection.

Engagement with the Oconto County Health and Wellbeing Community Action Workgroup Coalition for Oconto County where coalition members identified goals for the Oconto County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and ways to achieve those goals. This effort is designed to improve the physical and mental health of Oconto County community members.

Partnership with Kingdom Come Food Pantry where significant planning towards establishing Oconto Falls Community Garden for fresh produce procurement where 4,800lbs of fresh produce was donated to the pantry from this garden alone. Kingdom Come also receives information on recipes, food storage and food scarcity through this partnership. This effort aims to increase local food distribution and improve food security.

Support initiation, processes and management of a community garden which aims to promote gardening, physical activity, community partnerships, healthy eating, increased fruit and vegetable consumption and awareness for healthy pantry food donation.

Human Development and Relationships

Authors: Katie Daul

A coalition focused on strengthening connections, increasing awareness, and expanding resources to support optimal health and well-being for Oconto County residents. Monthly meetings as well as separate programming/events took place throughout the year. Location: County-wide

- County health rankings (2022) show that Oconto County residents rank themselves 17% in fair or poor health and 35% as always, usually or sometimes feeling lonely. Also record that they have 4.1 days (out of 30) physical health not good and 5.2 days where mental health was not good. These results are worse than the state rates in comparison. This effort involves collaboration with health care providers, spiritual care leaders, government agencies, and educational systems to promote and optimize overall health and well-being in communities. Progress is measured by Quality of Life indicators from county health rankings with the aim of stabilizing or improving scores related to physical health, mental health, and overall well-being with additional outcomes of increased social connectedness and reduction in isolation and loneliness. Connections - community events (hosting, supporting and sharing resources), building new partnerships, promoting volunteerism, and increasing physical activity opportunities. Awareness - addressed stigma around self-care. Resources - sharing resources through individual members marketing outlets, building database for findhelp.org a derivative of United Way's 211. Senior Wellness Fair Little Hearts Project Mental Health FairPlant Kindness tomato plantsFree Community Produce PantryCommunity GardenMen's Mental Health EventWalk and Talk walking programSocial Media speakerNAMI North Bay ChapterLay-ups for Landen Our initiatives led to stronger community connections, increased awareness of available programs, and improved access to resources that support emotional, physical, mental, and social health. These efforts attracted new partners and volunteers, which not only expanded our reach but also contributed to greater social connectedness and reduced isolation among residents. An intentional focus on intergenerational engagement and aging-in-place strategies was integrated into every initiative, ensuring positive impact across all age groups.

A monthly electronic newsletter for anyone to receive information about Extension programming and events, with specific audiences being Oconto County residents. A monthly electronic newsletter, for Oconto County residents, where local and state Extension programming and events are shared, UW-Madison offerings are shared, and public-facing content from internal newsletters. Through this effort, readers can learn about programming options, safe and trusted media (articles, partners' programming, videos) to increase their awareness, help build skills and confidence, and increase social connectedness.

- Extension in Oconto County has been noted as a well-kept secret. After completing environmental scans, all of the partners I met with agreed with the need for a newsletter to share information in an easily accessible manner. Partners shared that it is hard to look for something on the Extension websites because they do not know what to look for. Increasing marketing of available programs, the work of Extension at the county and as a whole is shared to extend to the general public, even those not currently involved with programming. The e-newsletter also creates space for partner news and events to help eliminate silos and work in partnership with each other with mutual audiences. The newsletter is mailed to HCE Club President for sharing at meetings, sign-ups are available on e-signature and at tabling events, and through conversations and meetings. When starting the newsletter in December 2023, roughly 15 contacts were on the distribution list. The distribution list now holds over 126 and is growing. Through EMMA analytics, we can see what is most popular for subscribers based on clicks, views, and how often it is visited. A mail score is produced monthly (that calculates click throughs, shares, opt outs, and sign ups) and the e-newsletter has consistently scored 9.0 (out of 10.0) and above each



month. Using technology to keep people connected, informed, and aware is a cost-effective way to share and engage people interested in or continue to use the resources of UW-Madison Division of Extension.

COMET™ (Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory) training for agricultural service professionals, farmers, and rural community members to learn active listening skills to offer caring conversations as a support to people in a vulnerable space and before they are in a mental health crisis. The goal is to encourage the farming and rural communities to activate their noticing skills and to be better prepared to support each other through caring conversations to rebuild community connections. Location type: virtual; Total Reach: 6 participants from 6 different counties.

- “Farmers don’t play cards anymore” is something a farmwoman said in response to a question about why she attended an Extension workshop series for women farmers. She continued, saying that in years past, the neighborhood farm families would gather on Saturday nights to play cards. Now there might be only one working farm on a long stretch of road and it is not as easy to connect with others who are experiencing similar situations. One of the first signs of stress we often see in the farming community is when individuals or families stop attending meetings, religious activities or stop showing up at the gas station or feed mill for the morning coffee klatch. There are a handful of curricula that address suicide prevention, such as Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR), and SafeTALK. These are specific to support those with suicidal thoughts and in crisis. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) offers a broader curriculum that includes active listening and listening nonjudgmentally; however, it is an 8-hour course. There is still stigma in rural and farming communities around suicide. The specific topic and intensity of suicide prevention trainings may be a barrier for rural community members. MHFA’s time commitment along with stigma may also deter busy farmers and agricultural professionals from participating. Multiple challenges are facing rural communities in accessing mental health. Existing resources and training often focus on crisis needs and immediate suicide risk. However, many people suffer from distress and moderate depression or anxiety that can significantly impact their health and well-being. COMET™ fills that gap in resources for people in this vulnerable space with caring conversations and aims to prevent crisis. COMET™ is a short, two-hour program designed by the High Plains Research Network (HPRN) in Eastern Colorado and offered by UW – Madison Division of Extension educators for the agricultural and rural communities in Wisconsin. The program is a gentle introduction to supporting friends and neighbors with caring conversations to help them shift their mental health trajectory back to a place of wellness and away from the path of a mental health crisis. UW-Madison Division of Extension partners with the Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program’s Farm Well Wisconsin staff (SWCAP) to offer this training to rural and agricultural communities throughout Wisconsin. Rural communities and farm families value supporting each other in times of need. COMET™ helps people take the next step after noticing someone might be struggling. It empowers friends and neighbors to be more prepared to support each other through caring conversations. The training offers seven questions to guide a conversation, so it feels natural with a beginning, middle, and the important graceful, supportive exit. 6 participants were trained with COMET to improve their active listening skills and their confidence in engaging in a caring conversation to support someone’s mental health. [To Be Updated when data from Colorado arrives. Pre/Post evaluations indicate that participants are more likely to (xxx point improvement) invite family or friend to tell them more about a potentially emotional situation. On a scale of 1-10 with 1= not likely and 10 very likely, the average score was xx on how likely they were to use COMET in the next 3 months.]

A one-hour educational program for older adults where participants gained knowledge of technology skills. Through this effort, participants increased skillsets in technology use via staying socially connected, adapting and using modifications, and safety features. Location type: virtual; Total Reach: 55 people 1 time for 15 minutes



- Smartphone ownership among adults 65 and older has grown to 61%, up from just 18% in 2012. However, 73% of these users say they need help using new devices and only 26% feel confident using technology. Older adults can be more vulnerable to scams and hacks and more hesitant to undertake training or education of the topic. A powerpoint "Technology to Thrive" using technology for good with a focus on connection, learning, and safety. Discussed the importance of social connection, learning new skills or hobbies (maintaining or increasing cognitive engagement), modification to assist with aging in place, and safety features. *This was an introduction of smartphone/tech education that was shared with participants of the statewide virtual StrongBodies program as a part of their educational series. Digital literacy enables: -access to telehealth, medication reminders, and health-monitoring.-use of video calls, messaging apps, and social media to stay connected, reducing loneliness and depression.-access to online learning and brain-training apps to help maintain mental sharpness-freedom and independence to age in place via use of "smart" devices for lighting, sounds, cameras, keys, etc. -safety features for first responders communication with emergency contacts (DMV, ICE, Sheriff's Dept. apps)

A project to implement a series of walks for aging adults to increase physical activity and social connection over the winter. Location type: Gillett; Total Reach: 5 local school districts and its community members

- Our rural communities lack the number of health fitness facilities that are welcoming and accessible (location or financially) to the aging population. Weather-related issues also become a barrier in fall/winter and creates many unsafe conditions outdoors. Additionally, social isolation increases and seasonal affective disorder are common. Starting or continuing a health habit over winter combats poor immune systems which can fend off colds and influenza that lead to higher risk health conditions. Planning and mapping of safe indoor and outdoor walking routes in 5 local communities. Routes were chosen based on accessibility, opportunities for educational engagement, and groups. Facilitators will lead walking routes on a weekly basis and will be training community members as facilitators. Community education (healthy aging, finances, nutrition, falls prevention, etc.) will be provided after or during the walk to increase engagement and conversation. Future walks (summer outdoor) will include intergenerational scavenger hunts. To increase education and enjoyment, a "tour" of the Ice Age Trail will be used as mile marker points throughout the sessions. Physical activity, including walking, has numerous health benefits in older adults. Walking decreases the risk or severity of various health outcomes such as cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes mellitus, cognitive impairment and dementia, while also improving mental well-being, sleep, and longevity. walking briskly for 30 min per day for 5 days can reduce the risk of several age-associated diseases. (National Institute on Health) With an increase in the aging population comes a greater focus on healthy aging, which involves maintaining physical and mental health as people age. Walking requires no special equipment or facilities and can be done at any time of day, making it an ideal form of physical activity for people of all ages and abilities to connect socially. Walking together exercises the brain as you socialize and interpret (verbal and non-verbal) communication. There is also added accountability and motivation when partnering or group walking with others. -Increased physical activity at schools via walking-Increased physical activity at schools via weight room-Decrease in falls - increasing independence, decreasing healthcare visits, ambulance calls-Increased participation in social events at school via extra curricular events-Decrease in anxiety and depression, loneliness over winter months (shut ins, SAD) due to weather related barriers. -Encourage behavior change and self-care (increase water intake, building good habits, rebuke ageism)



Positive Youth Development: 4-H and Teen Court

Aimee Elkins

Significant support and guidance around new development of club bylaws, awareness and implementation of 4-H policies, appropriate PYD foundations, mitigating issues among leaders and parents, supporting a club succession plan, and being clear with program expectations.

Significant support around obtaining and completing the end of year paperwork required for the club, identifying club members, issues, barriers and potential to remain in good standing with WI 4-H.

A connection was made with a new community partner to explore the possibility of Oconto County 4-H, Health and Well-being, and Marinette County 4-H partnering with the Nationally recognized Lasagna Love program to meet critical food security needs in our communities. A meeting occurred with a volunteer coordinator from Lasagna Love and brainstorming began to see how we could partner in the future.



Significant effort and planning to recruit Oconto County Teen court panelists, utilizing developed marketing materials, reaching out to local school districts and community partners and sharing the program and opportunity. Total Reach: 21



- 21 youth in grades 9-12 applied to become Oconto County Teen Court panelists from Oconto, Oconto Falls, Lena, Gillett, and Suring School Districts representing each district in our county. This will allow a wide range of panelists to take turns hearing cases and we will be able to assign cases so that youth are not feeling conflicted.

Developing a cohesive training program for Oconto County Teen Court panelists to participate in using a variety of methods and tools to support their skill development to hear cases of their peers and suggest appropriate sanctions to complete to clear their records.

Significant planning and effort to rebrand and market the Oconto County Teen Court Positive Youth Development Program. This includes creating a new logo, brochures, flyers, and connecting with community partners and potential panelists.



Providing a civic engagement and Teen Court focused session to 130 Oconto Falls Middle School Youth who are participating in a Youth Government Day at the Oconto County Courthouse to provide education around opportunities they have to learn and grow as productive youth in Oconto County. (Location type: Both)

An opportunity to connect with a 3rd grade classroom at Oconto Elementary School to provide a Thanksgiving lesson with food decorating- building a candy turkey, and wildlife skills making a turkey call allowing for hands on learning and sparks exploration with 20 students.

An opportunity to share information and connect with high school students from Oconto High School during their College and Career Fair including volunteer, Americorps, 4-H and Teen Court opportunities. Total Reach: 200



Working with Oconto Unified School District to develop, plan, and implement summer school courses for this coming Summer School Term.

Planning for a multi-county Winter Leadership Camp experience for youth ages 13 and above.

- Offering educational experiences for older youth is a priority in positive youth development. Winter Leadership Camp is an annual opportunity focusing on developing a variety of leadership skills. Educators from each of the counties collaborate to plan a schedule, theme, promotion, and other details for the event. Youth input is encouraged for parts of the planning. The impacts we are hoping to achieve are that youth will increase their leadership skills, meet new people, learn about leadership opportunities in 4-H, and enjoy a winter camping experience.

Planning takes place to connect with colleagues on how their Teen Court Programs run, gain insight, and resources they may have to share regarding their current programs, as well as maintain a working relationship/support network for those doing similar work.

- Oconto County identified a need to continue teen court programming, the decision was made to have this program continue under the PYD Institute with myself assuming a 1.0 position in Oconto County to rebuild the program as well as maintain the current 4-H program. In the coming year I will be connecting with colleagues, local stakeholders, school districts, community members, and youth to get the program up and thriving again.

Monthly Meetings of the Oconto County 4-H Volunteers where the Educator provides programmatic support, oversight, updates, and development opportunities to attendees.

A series of meetings with a local high school student to provide support around career exploration in her area of interests including animal sciences and education.



Health and Well-Being- Covering Wisconsin

Authors: Adam Vanspankeren, Alicia Utke-Becher, Allison Espeseth, Caroline Gomez-Tom, Elizabeth Rothe

Over the past year, Covering Wisconsin has coordinated and overseen 12 regional- and population-focused coalitions in which Wisconsin professionals interested or directly involved in health insurance enrollment gather to discuss changes to health coverage policy, share outreach and educational strategies, receive free professional trainings, and offer ideas for relevant consumer resource messaging and design. Through our efforts, a total of 88 coalition meetings were held, attracting 1,649 attendees, to focus on the health coverage issues affecting Wisconsin residents, especially immigrants, Spanish-speaking residents, Hmong residents, and those located in Central, East Central, Milwaukee, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, and Western regions. (Location type: Geography Served) Total Reach: Total Reach over previous 12 months:12 enrollment network coalitions facilitated 88 coalition meetings held 1,649 people attended 2,325 people were reached through coalition informational emails sent

- Wisconsin's enrollment networks were created in response to complex shifts in our health coverage landscape: first with the initial implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance Marketplace, then more recently with the COVID-19 pandemic and Medicaid unwinding renewals process where Medicaid members needed to re-apply for their benefits for the first time in four years. The current chapter for the enrollment networks comes at of time of federal cuts for health insurance Navigators and numerous significant federal health care policy changes to Medicaid and the HealthCare.gov Health Insurance Marketplace. This includes enrollment eligibility specific to immigrant communities expected to change and go into effect over the next few years. Over the past year, Covering Wisconsin has coordinated and overseen 12 regional- and population-focused coalitions in which Wisconsin professionals interested or directly involved in health insurance enrollment gather to discuss changes to health coverage policy, share outreach and educational strategies, receive free professional trainings, and offer ideas for relevant consumer resource messaging and design. While previous to July 2025, Covering Wisconsin was able to allocate funding to support capacity used to host and lead individual enrollment network gatherings, these funds are now largely unavailable. Nonetheless, it is notable that community partners are choosing to continue to host and hold meetings to support enrollment professionals and the communities they serve during this time of big coverage changes. Enrollment coalition networks hosted 88 meeting over the last year to bring together health care partners and enrollment assisters around topics such as: unauthorized enrollment and plan switches on HealthCare.gov; consumer experience with the Medicaid MAPP program; DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) HealthCare.gov eligibility; Marketplace Integrity and Affordability Final Rule; Special Enrollments, Covering Wisconsin highlights; updated uninsured data overview; County IM (Income Maintenance) Agency updates; member feedback about Open Enrollment; BadgerCare and FoodShare 101; issues affecting immigrant coverage eligibility and enrollment; overview of Open Enrollment impact data; national policy updates; Essential Health Benefits (EHBs); self-care and wellness promotion with enrollment assisters; Mexican Consulate updates, digital literacy, and health literacy concepts.

Navigator enrollment assistance provided to anyone in Wisconsin, where 97,013 consumers were assisted with health insurance questions or enrollment. Through this effort, our Navigators completed 4,041 qualified health plan enrollments through the federal Health Insurance Marketplace and assisted 5,615 consumers with Medicaid, resulting in widespread access to health care and improved health outcomes. (Location type: Geography Served) Total Reach:

Statewide: -97,013 consumers helped-4,041 Marketplace qualified health plan enrollments-5,615 Medicaid enrollments-32,283 consumers educated in health insurance literacy

- Covering Wisconsin Navigators perform education, outreach, and enrollment in response to the continued need from both the public and other professionals for help sorting out the highly complex health insurance landscape in order to access more affordable and timely health care. Finding the more appropriate and affordable coverage is a complicated task for nearly everyone, particularly given that eligibility policies and processes are continuously changing in big and more nuanced ways. Covering Wisconsin serves everyone and is especially attentive to individuals who may encounter the most hurdles. These can correspond with location, language, education, age, extent of experience with the Wisconsin health care and coverage system, along with other factors. Recognizing that these challenges contribute to delayed care and treatment, avoidable medical debt, and poor health outcomes, our Navigators work to meet consumers where they are, providing services in person or remotely, with accurate information, hands-on support, and service that responds to each individual's questions, needs and preferences. Our Navigator team has developed and executed a coordinated outreach and enrollment strategy, coordinating with many partner organizations to better reach consumers in every county of the state. We provide year-round, impartial, no-cost enrollment assistance to consumers through in-person appointments, phone consultations, and virtual platforms, including our online webchat tool which offers an opportunity to live chat with a Navigator during business hours. Our federally certified and state-licensed Navigator team participates in regular trainings to stay current on health coverage policies, ensuring the guidance we provide is timely and accurate. We collaborate with local health departments, libraries, food pantries, community-based organizations, resource networks, houses of worship, other Extension programs, and more to reach individuals who are most likely to need coverage though who are unlikely to be aware of this available service. We also developed multilingual materials and utilized interpreter services to ensure language is never a barrier for the consumers we help. As a result of this work, we assisted more than 97,000 Wisconsin residents understand, gain, or maintain health coverage. Covering Wisconsin Navigators completed 4,041 qualified health plan enrollments through the federal health insurance Marketplace and assisted 5,616 consumers with Medicaid. These efforts helped reduce the uninsured rate throughout the state and helped individuals access preventive care, chronic condition management, and financial assistance for health insurance and medical expenses. Beyond the numbers, we empower individuals with the tools and knowledge to more capably navigate the healthcare system, which can lead to individual health outcomes and also support the long-term economic and social well-being of families and communities across Wisconsin. We continuously build on these outcomes to provide ever-more efficient means of communication, education, and assistance, leading to gains in the number of Wisconsin residents served.



**OFFICE OF LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS
A Division of Land & Water Resources Department**

GIS – Land Records – Physical Address – Property Listing - Surveying

LIS Department Report

Dec23, 2025

GIS/Land Records/Administration

- We have been checking the 2026 Orthos that we received so far, we have seen a few small issues with a couple of roof lines and a bridge but overall, we are very impressed. The sharpness and positional accuracy have been superb. Once our review is complete then Ayres will start creating the final products so that we can get them up on the website.
- We have been assisting zoning with creating 2026 ortho maps on numerous issues.
- Working with TS on Laserfiche implementation for LIS. In addition to current records on IMS we are looking at the possibility of hosting static stock maps on laser fiche. Items such as address maps, voting maps, etc...
 - Workflow testing is complete.
 - Web form for public survey searches needs to be completed by Laserfiche, once this is completed, we can start the transition for the public searches.
 - The method of importing the historical documents is undergoing further testing. We may have to run the old web form and the new Laserfiche web form simultaneously until the historic document importing is completed.
- We have started moving forward on server upgrades.
 - Spillman Server
 - Spillman is extremely backlogged, booked out to Q3 of 2027. We are pursuing hosting a Group conversion project to bump this up to Q1 2026.
 - Cloud point and TS are working together to get the Spilman Server installed and configured.
 - Main GIS Server
 - Ruekert Mielke has started upgrading SOLO
 - TS/Cloud point will start building this server once the Spillman Server schedule is resolved.
- Assisting TEDCOR with various maps to support BEAD Grant program, TIP district creation and other projects.
- Discussion is continuing Proposed legislation for changes to the transfer fee.
- Spent significant time editing address maps for cartographic consistency while Tonia is working on the data checks.
- Continued work on edits for Section 25 parcel adjustments for the Town of Breed.
- Working with Highway Dept and ESRI on possible alternatives to current sign/culvert inventories and potential snowplow routing software.
- Work on Supporting pages and maps for the Plat book has commenced. Ownership maps will wait for the new year and spring election.
- Worked on various tasks/maps for the following departments (Zoning, Forestry, County Clerk).
- Worked on various tasks/maps for other governments and private parties (TEDCOR, City of Oconto, Pomeroy Forest Products, City of Oconto Falls, Mach IV).



**OFFICE OF LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS
A Division of Land & Water Resources Department**

GIS – Land Records – Physical Address – Property Listing - Surveying

Physical Address

- Issued 8 new physical addresses & installed signs.
- Issued 1 replacement signs.
- Working on 15+ physical address changes to be completed in early 2026.
- Sent 1 letter to owners informing them they need to apply for a physical address for their property.
- Sent 2 letters to property owners regarding the need for a replacement physical address sign or other issue with their sign.
- Reviewed 13 CSM's with Property Listing.
- Added 0 items to the Survey Index. Holding off on entering anything new in the survey database – will start backup when Laserfiche is up and running.
- Continually submitting Google map edits for new/changed physical addresses.
- Adding/updating Address Points and Physical Addresses on Arc Pro.

Projects

- Editing physical address maps – verifying road names vs town's gas tax map, checking to ensure all physical addresses are on map & are adhering to OCPA grid & sending letters if any parcels w/ structures don't have physical addresses. Chase is completed – emailed town regarding 4 road issues. There are 23 physical addresses that need to change. Currently working on Maple Valley PA map. Sent email to town regarding 3 road name discrepancies.
- Working with Town of Pensaukee on partial physical address sign replacement project – signs were received. 2nd order submitted.
- Sent information to Town of Lena regarding the physical address sign replacement project.
- Corresponding w/ Town of Stiles regarding need for replacement physical address signs.
- Working with the Town of Maple Valley on a partial physical address sign replacement project. Initial order was submitted.
- Created spreadsheet for road name discrepancies after MSAG updates (115 road name issues to research).
- Working on 90+ needed address changes in several different townships.
- Assisted property listing with deeds, calls, tax bills.
- Assisted property listing w/ folding of tax bills.

Property Listing

- Parcel listings are continually updated based on deeds and other recorded documents.
- Taxes were calculated and the tax bills printed the beginning of December. Tax bills were mailed out 12/11/25.
- Laserfiche conversion from IMS21 image storage is underway.
- Various data requests are received and fulfilled.
- Questions and concerns from members of the public are answered promptly. The mailing of the tax bills causes an increase in the volume of phone calls.
- CSMs/plats are reviewed on a weekly basis.
- Committee members are welcome to stop by and learn more about Property Listing.



OFFICE OF LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS
A Division of Land & Water Resources Department

GIS – Land Records – Physical Address – Property Listing - Surveying

Surveying

- The initial 2025 orthophotos have been delivered from Ayres for our review prior to final approval and implementation. We have a network of field checks throughout the county where we can compare the actual surveyed field location versus the orthophoto location. This allows us to independently spot check the accuracy of the photos to guarantee they meet the specifications of the contract. I hope to complete the spot checks and other review by end of year or shortly after.
- North County Line Project - About 2/3 of the Town of Lakewood is complete and shared with Forest County so we can both use these common points. Most corners have been surveyed in Townsend and have been shared, but a handful of them need further examination, by multiple agencies, before decisions about their locations are finalized. This project is ongoing throughout the “leaf-off” season.
- One new tie sheet drafted and two new section summaries. These were in the Town of Bagley.
- Revised some small errors on two existing section summaries, one in Townsend and one in Abrams.
- Assisted several private surveyors and title companies with R/W Plans, old survey files, and many other mapping issues that existed. Spent time digging for the hard-to-find information and cleaned up some areas of parcel mapping.
- Continue to review Land Divisions in the form of CSM's and Plats. Many submittals have come in prior to end of year.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Memorandum

November 21, 2025

TO: Summer Strand, Chairperson

FROM: Kate Christensen, Administrator
Tara N. Bachman, Deputy Administrator
Division of Energy Regulation and Analysis

RE: Application of Fox Solar, LLC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Construct a Solar Electric Generation Facility Capable of Generating Up to 100 MW, a Collector Substation, a Generation Tie Line, and a Battery Energy Storage System in the Town of Morgan, Oconto County, Wisconsin 9833-CE-100

Request for Extension of Time Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3)(g)

The purpose of this memorandum is to request an extension of time for the Commission to take final action on the application of Fox Solar, LLC (applicant), filed on June 23, 2025, for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) under Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3) to construct a solar electric generation facility capable of generating up to 100 megawatts (MW), a collector substation, a generation tie line, and a 50 MW battery energy storage system capable of storing 200 megawatt-hours of energy (project). The proposed project would be constructed in the Town of Morgan, Oconto County, Wisconsin.

The Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources are reviewing the application to construct the facilities described above. On July 23, 2025, the Commission, under Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3)(a)2. and Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 111.51, determined the CPCN application to be complete. ([PSC REF#: 555563](#).)

Under Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3)(g), the Commission is required to take final action on a CPCN application within 180 days after the application is determined or considered to be

complete. If the Commission fails to take final action within the 180-day period, the Commission is considered to have issued a CPCN with respect to the application. In this matter, the 180-day deadline expires on January 19, 2026. However, Wis. Stat. § 196.491(3)(g) provides that the Chairperson of the Commission, for good cause, may extend the time period for action for an additional 180 days.

Given the size of the project and the various tasks that need to be performed in the docket, including opportunity for discovery and submission of testimony and exhibits, and after holding a prehearing conference with the parties, the Administrative Law Judge has ordered a schedule in this docket that extends beyond the initial 180 days. ([PSC REF#: 567279](#).)

While a 180-day extension of time is requested, Commission staff is diligently working to complete its review and anticipates that the Commission may be able to take action before the end of the extended deadline.

If this request is granted, the new deadline for taking final action will be Monday, July 20, 2026.¹

PURSUANT TO WIS. STAT. § 196.491(3)(g), THE REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION OF TIME FOR AN ADDITIONAL 180 DAYS IS:

GRANTED
 DENIED

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, this 2nd of December, 2025.



Summer Strand
Chairperson

¹ Pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 2.05, because the last day for the Commission to take action falls on a day that the Commission is closed, the deadline would be the next day the Commission is open, July 20, 2026.

SS:KC:TNB:HMY:arw:dsa:DL:02098729

Key Background Documents

[Completeness Determination Letter - PSC REF#: 555563](#)

[Prehearing Conference Memorandum - PSC REF#: 567279](#)

1 14.422 Recreational Vehicles & Camping Units

2

3 (a) Recreational vehicles/camping units may be parked or stored on the owners' home premises as
4 an accessory use provided no permanent living quarters or business use is conducted herein. **Such**
5 **units shall be permitted to be stored within a garage, carport, or accessory structure or in**
6 **the rear or side yard areas of developed parcels of land, provided setback standards are**
7 **met. A maximum of three recreational vehicles/camping units owned by the property owner**
8 **may be parked or stored on the owners' home premises. The recreational vehicles/camping**
9 **units shall be in a road ready or storage mode position. Road ready/storage mode means**
10 **no utility connections, windows, doors, bumpouts closed and not used for sleeping**
11 **purposes. Units shall not be stored on undeveloped parcels.**

12

13 (b) **Recreational vehicles/camping units** ~~Camping trailers, truck campers, houseboats and motor~~
14 ~~homes~~ may be permitted for their recreation uses in all districts excluding the Floodplain **and**
15 **Conservancy** District except that they shall not be used for the purpose of permanent habitation.
16 Such recreation vehicles/**camping units** shall not remain on an **undeveloped parcel** ~~lot~~ or
17 premises more than **60 30 consecutive** days. Any such vehicle may be left on the land for more
18 than **60 30 consecutive** days provided that a temporary use permit is obtained and an approved
19 sanitary facility is provided.

20

21 (c) The wheels or any similar transporting devices of any recreational vehicle shall not be removed
22 except for repairs, nor shall any such recreational vehicle be otherwise fixed to the ground in any
23 manner that would prevent "road ready" removal **at all times**.

24

25 (d) All recreational vehicles/camping units shall comply with all adopted standards of the
26 Recreational Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) and shall be kept in good repair and
27 licensed for highway use, if applicable.

28

29 (e) No abandoned, dilapidated, unsafe or unsanitary unit will be allowed on a parcel. Units must
30 be kept clean and free of weeds, junk or discarded materials, dilapidated tarps or equipment
31 and any items that present the appearance of permanent habitation or neglect.

32

33 (f) Accessory structures such as decks, porches, patios and carports may be allowed by
34 permit, subject to zoning setback standards. However, in no case shall the accessory
35 structure be attached to the recreational vehicle/camping unit.

36

37 (g) Recreational vehicle/camping unit shall comply with all setback requirements for the zoning
38 district in which they are located including the shoreland, floodplain and wetland districts,
39 where applicable.

40

41 (h) Camping restrictions in Residential Districts (R-1, R-2, R-3)
42 1) Only one recreational vehicle/camping unit is allowed per the lots minimum district
43 standards.
44 2) To have more than one (1) recreational vehicle/camping unit, the lot must have an
45 additional 20,000 square feet for each unit.
46 3) Temporary extended placement is allowed in Residential districts starting the Friday
47 before Memorial Day through the Tuesday after Labor Day with issuance of a temporary
48 land use permit and sanitary permit for an approved sanitary facility regardless of the
49 allowed 30 consecutive day window.
50 4) Parcels where a permit allows temporary extended placement of a recreational
51 vehicle/camping unit shall obtain and display a physical address number.
52 5) All other RV standards are applicable.

53

54 (i) Camping restrictions in all other districts where permitted excluding the Floodplain and
55 Conservancy District
56 1) Annual placement of a recreational vehicle/camping unit is allowed with issuance of an
57 annual temporary land use permit and sanitary permit for an approved sanitary facility.
58 2) Land Use permits issued under this section are valid until December 31st of the
 calendar year in which they were issued.

59 3) Parcels where a permit allows annual placement of a recreational vehicle/camping unit
60 shall obtain and display a physical address number.
61 4) All other RV standards are applicable.

63 (j) In no event, shall there be more than three (3) such recreational vehicles/camping units on
64 any one parcel without a state campground permit except for the following events:
65 1) For a special event (i.e. family reunion, holiday, etc) up to five (5) recreational
66 vehicles/camping units will be allowed on a parcel for a period of up to nine (9)
67 consecutive days.

69 (k) Leasing or renting of recreational vehicles is not allowed on a parcel outside of a licensed
70 campground.

72 (l) Buses, construction trailers, truck bodies and trailers and other similar items not intended
73 or designed for use as a recreational vehicle or camping units are prohibited from such
74 use.

76 (m) Park Model Recreational Vehicles are allowed only in licensed campgrounds.

78 (n) Permit fees cannot be pro-rated for the calendar year. After issuance of the initial permit,
79 permits must be renewed on a yearly basis with payment of the permit fee to Oconto
80 County. Renewal of a permit shall require multiple photos of the recreational vehicle
81 location to assure compliance with the recreational vehicle standards.

83 (o) Non-compliance with any of the above requirements on a site may deter the renewal of any
84 permit for recreational vehicle use.

85 (p) Within one (1) year after the adoption of this amendment, all nonconforming recreational
86 vehicles shall comply with the terms of this Section.

91 Current Zoning Ordinance Definitions:

93 **Camping Unit:** Any portable device, no more than 400 square feet in area, used as a temporary
94 dwelling, including but not limited to a camping trailer, motor home, bus, van, pick-up truck or tent. For
95 the purpose of calculating area, exterior dimensions excluding the hitch will be utilized.

96 **Recreational Park Trailer:** A recreational vehicle that is primarily designed to provide temporary living
97 quarters for recreation, camping or seasonal use; built on a single chassis; mounted on wheels; which has
98 a gross trailer area not exceeding 400 square feet in the set-up mode and is certified by the manufacturer
99 as complying with ANSI A119.5.

100 **Recreational Vehicle:** A vehicle having an overall length of 45 feet or less and a body width of 8 feet or
101 less primarily designed as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use, which has its
102 own motive power or is mounted or drawn by another vehicle. The basic entities are: travel trailer, camping
103 trailer, truck camper and motor home.

104 **Campground:** Any parcel or tract of land owned by a person, state or local government, which is designed,
105 maintained, intended or used for the purpose of providing sites for non-permanent overnight use by 4 or
106 more camping units, or by one to 3 camping units if the parcel or tract of land is represented as a
107 campground.

109

110

111



Monday, September 29, 2025

DATA CENTERS IN WISCONSIN

[In a press release](#), [Clean Wisconsin](#) (an environmental advocacy group) called into question the amount of energy demands and water consumption for new data centers already approved and those in consideration. According to the release, “There are currently at least five proposed or approved AI data center projects across the state, but just two have disclosed information about potential energy use. Those two projects—the Microsoft data center in Mt. Pleasant and Vantage data center in Port Washington—will require a combined 3.9 gigawatts (GW) of electric power, which is enough energy to power 4.3 million Wisconsin homes...And because only two of the data center projects have disclosed their power needs, we know this is really just a fraction of what the energy use would be if all those data centers are ultimately built.” The release continues by saying, “There has been very little transparency about the amount of water that will be used on site at these proposed data center campuses. Add to that a lack of transparency about energy use, and it’s impossible to know what the impact on Wisconsin’s water resources will be...If data centers come to Wisconsin, they must benefit—not harm—our communities. But right now, we have far more questions than answers about their impacts. How much energy and water will a project use? How will those demands be met?”

A data center is a physical facility which houses critical IT infrastructure, including servers, storage systems, and network equipment. Data centers require significant infrastructure to support the center’s hardware and software. That includes power subsystems, uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), ventilation, cooling systems, fire suppression, backup generators, and connections to external networks. There are several types of data centers and they are classified on whether they are owned by one company or many organizations, how they fit into the data system geographically, what technology they use for computing and storage, and their energy efficiency. There are six main types of data centers:

- AI data centers
 - Specifically designed to support high demanding computational requirements of artificial intelligence workloads. They require advanced infrastructure – software-defined networking, built-in security, and high-performance GPUs and TPUs to process data and complex AI algorithms.
- Enterprise data centers
 - Company owned and operated, typically located on corporate campuses and serve internal users.
- Managed services data centers
 - Managed by a third party on behalf of a company. The company leases the equipment and infrastructure.
- Colocation data centers
 - A company rents space within a data center owned by others and located off company premises. The colocation centers hosts the infrastructure while the company provides and manages the components.
- Cloud data centers
 - Off-premise data centers where data and applications are hosted by a cloud services provider like Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and IBM designed to support massive workloads and global scalability.
- Edge data centers
 - Smaller, decentralized facility close to end users and devices to process data locally. Support real-time applications for industries like IoT, autonomous vehicles, and content delivery.

Data centers require a significant amount of energy. There are two reasons data centers are growing so quickly and increasing the demand for electricity. The first is the United States are doing more things which require access to shared data like shopping online, streaming videos, business communications, and artificial intelligence. AI is the biggest driver for more data centers and therefore more energy. AI requests require more data analysis than typical internet search; they require more powerful processors called Graphic Processing Units (GPUs), which consume more electricity and need more water for cooling. General Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) describes tools and systems which generate texts, images and video. A simple small AI text request uses a small amount of energy, while creating a high-quality five-second video can consume more than 700 times the energy (the difference between running a microwave for 1/10 of a second versus running a microwave for an hour).

In addition to the energy used to run the computer equipment, servers processing AI tool requests get hot and release heat into the data center. The heat can damage electronic components, so cooling is required. Air conditioning systems require significant amounts of electricity but use little water. Water-based cooling is preferred for technology because it is usually cheaper. Computer Room Air Handlers (CRAH) take the hot air that rises within the room, cool it, and return it to the bottom of the room. The machines consist of coils with chilled water. The hot air transfers the heat to the water, cooling the air, but heating the water. So, the water needs to be chilled again. The hot water goes to cooling towers. This requires fresh water.

The Wheeler Report met with Clean Wisconsin about their concerns. They said, the approval process for data centers is often done through the local governing boards for towns and municipalities. They expressed concerns that local elected officials are usually the only people to know about a possible data center coming to a community and some are signing NDA (non-disclosure agreements) while discussions are ongoing between the company and the local government. They said often the public is unaware of the discussions until the deal is finalized and voted on by the local government, highlighting that a regulatory entity like the Public Service Commission is not involved.

Clean Wisconsin's concerns center on the environmental impact of the data centers and their demands for energy. They said they have concerns over the increased demand for resources (coal, natural gas, nuclear, back-up generators, and water). They expressed concerns over where the power plants may be built, and the need for additional infrastructure. Their loudest concern at this time was the increased water consumption and the lack of public awareness of the proposals until the last minute or after they had already been approved. They would like to see legislation passed that "press the pause on the development of these large, hyper scale data centers until the communities really can understand what's going on. Until we know exactly what the impacts are going to be on our water resources, until we know how many new power plants are going to be sited in our communities...The scale of what's happening is unlike anything we have ever seen, but these are being treated as an Amazon warehouse is coming to town. It's being treated like any other kind of development, but it certainly is not. I think the Port Washington data center was eye opening when people understood the scale of what that is going to be and understood that this is just the beginning. We need to take a pause and really demand transparency from the developers and from our utilities. Our utilities are supposed to be serving the public interest. They have an obligation to tell people what their plans are to meet the needs of these gigantic users."

The Public Service Commission doesn't regulate or oversee manufacturers and other businesses in Wisconsin, they regulate utilities. The PSC would oversee the energy companies who would be building energy generating centers to accommodate the increased energy demands of any data centers. According to [Legislative Fiscal Bureau Informational Paper 7](#),

Several factors combine to make the utility sector unique compared to other markets. The nature of utility service provision results in expensive initial infrastructure investments and rapidly declining costs per customer served. The resulting "natural monopoly" means that the most cost-efficient outcome for service provision is total market control by one provider. However, total market control may lead to anti-competitive behavior and thus increased costs to consumers. In order to balance the public interest of cost-efficient utility service provision with the potentially negative effects of total market power, public utilities are subject to strict regulation by the PSC, which in exchange allows them to operate as monopolies.

The PSC regulates electric, natural gas, steam, water and combined water and sewer utilities and some local telephone service. The Commission is responsible for setting the level and structure of rates for utility service based on authorized rates of return on investment, and regulating the construction, use, modification, and financing of utility operating property, including the use of depreciation accounts for new construction, overseeing transactions between a public utility and an affiliated interest, determining levels of adequate and safe service, and responding to consumer complaints about utility operations and prices.

Sen. Jesse James and Rep. Shae Sortwell started circulating a bill draft that would prioritize nuclear energy resources, approve a certain electric tariff for very large customers, and authorize electric utilities to recover certain precertification costs through rates. In the cosponsorship memo, they mentioned data centers, "Wisconsin is already experiencing dramatically increased energy demand, largely driven by the development of data centers and the industrial sector. Our need for power isn't going to stop growing anytime soon. Recently announced projects in Mt. Pleasant and Port Washington will likely require more electric power than all residences in the state combined. It is clear that Wisconsin needs to rapidly expand its energy generation. Thankfully, nuclear power is ready to help fill the void. Wisconsin is increasingly being recognized nationwide as a state open to next-generation nuclear energy. With nuclear technology being one of the cleanest, safest, and most reliable energy options we have, it is time for Wisconsin to lead."

- [LRB-4710 Memo Nuclear Energy](#) (Sortwell, Shae) A nuclear energy generation tax credit; prioritizing nuclear energy resources; approval of certain electric tariffs for very large customers; and authorizing electric utilities to recover certain precertification costs through rates. *Deadline: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 16:00*

Clean Wisconsin referenced nuclear power by saying, "Utilities are considering nuclear clean energy, and that is an issue because we have one nuclear power plant in Wisconsin. It's the Point Beach Nuclear site. All of the nuclear waste produced by that utility is stored on site on the shores of Lake Michigan because there is no place to dispose of spent nuclear rods. So if we have to build three Point Beaches, our communities will be saddled with more nuclear waste stored on site for those power plants. That is the reality. I think you're seeing developers and energy utilities throw around the word clean in a way that is disingenuous...Certainly, strides are being made around nuclear energy, and that's great, but these data centers if they're going to go up by 2028 there's not even enough time to build a nuclear power plant by 2028."

Clean Wisconsin closed the interview by highlighting the other states and other countries that have put in moratoriums on data center saying, "Maybe we should have taken more time to understand the impacts and then how to mitigate. You can't mitigate impacts that you don't know."



State of Wisconsin 2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0136/1

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2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 713

December 3, 2025 - Introduced by Representatives KITCHENS, NOVAK, GOODWIN, KREIBICH and MURSAU, cosponsored by Senator TOMCZYK. Referred to Committee on Environment.

1 **AN ACT *to create* 287.07 (6) and 287.175 of the statutes; relating to:** requiring
2 battery stewardship organizations to administer battery collection and
3 recycling programs and providing a penalty.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires battery stewardship organizations to operate programs in this state to collect and recycle covered batteries. A “battery stewardship organization” is defined in the bill as an entity, other than a state agency, that has been designated by one or more battery manufacturers (producers) to implement a battery stewardship plan. The bill defines “covered battery” as either a “portable battery” (a rechargeable battery weighing no more than 11 pounds and having a rating of no more than 300 watt-hours or a nonrechargeable battery weighing no more than 4.4 pounds) or a “medium format battery” (a rechargeable battery weighing more than 11 pounds or having a rating of more than 300 watt-hours, or both, but not exceeding 25 pounds or 2,000 watt-hours; or a nonrechargeable battery weighing more than 4.4 pounds but not more than 25 pounds). Under the bill, a “covered battery” does not include a battery that is contained in a medical device and that is not designed or marketed for retail sale; a battery that contains a liquid electrolyte; a lead acid battery; a battery that is not intended or designed to be easily removed from its product; or an alkaline battery.

Under the bill, beginning on January 1, 2027, or one year after the bill's

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enactment, whichever occurs first, no producer may sell a covered battery, or a product containing or packaged with a covered battery (battery containing product), in this state unless the battery stewardship organization designated by the producer of the battery or battery containing product 1) is operating under a battery stewardship plan that has been approved by the Department of Natural Resources; 2) submits certain annual reports to DNR; and 3) provides outreach and education to consumers, retailers, and others about its battery stewardship program.

In addition, beginning on January 1, 2027, or one year after the bill's enactment, whichever occurs first, no producer may sell a covered battery or battery containing product unless the covered battery or battery in the battery containing product is marked with an identification of the producer of the battery. Further, beginning on January 1, 2029, no producer may sell a covered battery or battery containing product unless the covered battery or battery in the battery containing product is marked to identify the chemistry of the battery and to indicate that the battery should not be disposed of as household waste.

To be approved by DNR, a proposed battery stewardship plan must include specific information, such as a list of all the brands of covered batteries sold in this state by producers that are members of the battery stewardship organization; performance goals under the plan, including target collection and recycling rates and goals for public awareness, and a process for achieving these goals; an education and outreach strategy; a process for making signage and other materials available to collection sites to inform consumers about management options for covered batteries; collection site safety training procedures relating to covered batteries; provisions for collecting covered batteries at no cost; the addresses of collection sites that will accept covered batteries under the plan; provisions for recordkeeping; and a method for fully funding the plan. The bill specifies that DNR may approve plans from more than one battery stewardship organization, and that DNR may approve plans that share the costs of implementing those plans among the battery stewardship organizations that benefit under those plans.

Under the bill, DNR must provide notice of a proposed battery stewardship plan. DNR has 120 days after receiving a proposed plan to approve, conditionally approve, or deny a proposed plan. Under the bill, a producer may not amend an approved battery stewardship plan unless the proposed amendments are approved by DNR. The bill provides that DNR must approve a plan or amendment if it meets the requirements of the bill.

The bill also requires DNR to maintain a website that includes a list of the names of producers with approved battery stewardship plans, copies of those plans and any reports submitted to DNR under such a plan, and a list of the brands of batteries covered under an approved plan.

The bill provides that a battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved by DNR is responsible for all costs associated with implementing the plan, unless the approved plan allows for cost sharing among other battery stewardship organizations with approved plans. The bill requires a battery stewardship

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organization to collect reasonable fees from participating producers, and to reimburse local governmental units for costs incurred as a result of a local government facility or solid waste facility serving as a collection site under the plan.

Under the bill, a battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved by DNR must provide for the collection of all covered batteries from any person, regardless of the chemistry or brand of the battery, on a free, continuous, convenient, visible, and accessible basis; provide free collection containers to collection sites under the plan; ensure that medium format batteries are collected only at certain staffed collection sites such as household hazardous waste collection sites; provide for the collection of damaged and defective batteries at certain sites; ensure statewide collection opportunities for all covered batteries; coordinate activities with other actors to provide efficient delivery of services and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and expense; and ensure a certain number and location of collection sites and collection events for both portable batteries and medium format batteries. The bill does not require a battery stewardship organization to provide for the collection of recalled batteries, battery containing products, or covered batteries that remain contained in a battery containing product at the time of delivery to a collection site or collection event.

The bill also requires a battery stewardship organization implementing an approved plan to undertake certain education and outreach activities to promote the implementation of the plan, including developing and maintaining a website; providing consumer-focused educational materials, to each collection site used under the plan, that are accessible by customers; providing safety information to collection sites; providing educational materials to the operators of collection sites for the management of recalled batteries; and providing educational materials describing collection opportunities for covered batteries to retailers and other potential collection sites. In addition, the bill provides that a battery stewardship organization implementing an approved plan may develop and distribute periodic press releases, articles, and advertisements; develop promotional materials about the plan and about the restriction on disposing of covered batteries; and conduct a survey, during the first year of implementing the plan and every five years thereafter, of public awareness of the provisions of this bill, and to share the results of the surveys with DNR.

Under the bill, a battery stewardship organization must submit annual reports to DNR with information about the implementation of its approved plan, including an independent financial disclosure of the organization's revenue, expenditures, and liabilities relating to its activities in this state and assessment of implementing the plan; a summary financial statement documenting the financing of the plan and an analysis of plan costs and expenditures; the weight of covered batteries collected under the plan and the weight of materials recycled from covered batteries collected under the plan; a calculation of the collection rate and the recycling efficiency rate under the plan; a list of all facilities used in processing or disposing of covered batteries under the plan and, for domestic facilities, a summary of any violations of environmental laws and regulations during the

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previous three years at each facility; a description of how collected batteries were managed and recycled; a description of education and outreach efforts supporting plan implementation and an evaluation of their effectiveness; an up-to-date map indicating the location of all collection sites used to implement the plan; and a summary of progress made toward the performance goals under the plan, and an explanation of why performance goals were not met, if applicable. The bill also requires a battery stewardship organization to ensure that an annual audit is conducted, by an independent third party, of the approved battery stewardship plan and the operation of that plan. Annual audits and reports must be made available to the public on the battery stewardship organization's website.

Under the bill, any person that intentionally and substantially violates the provisions of the bill relating to battery stewardship plans is subject to a civil forfeiture of up to \$7,000 per violation. The bill clarifies that a failure to meet the requirements of the bill despite a good faith effort does not constitute a violation.

In addition, under the bill, beginning on January 1, 2028, a person may not 1) knowingly cause or allow the disposal of a covered battery in a landfill or the burning of a covered battery; 2) dispose of a covered battery other than by delivery to a collection site or collection event operated under an approved battery stewardship plan; or 3) knowingly cause or allow the mixing of a covered battery with recyclable materials that are intended for processing and sorting at a material recovery facility, with municipal waste that is intended for disposal at a landfill, or with waste that is intended for burning or incineration.

Finally, the bill requires a battery stewardship organization implementing an approved plan to submit, by July 1, 2027, a report to DNR on any assessments prepared in other states, if available, of the opportunities and challenges associated with the end-of-life management of certain portable and medium format batteries that are not intended or designed to be easily removed by a customer. Under the bill, DNR must submit this report to the legislature with recommendations as to whether the provisions of this bill can be applied to batteries that are not intended or designed to be easily removed from the device in which they are contained.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 287.07 (6) of the statutes is created to read:

2 **287.07 (6) BATTERIES.** Beginning on January 1, 2028, no person may dispose
3 of or burn a covered battery, as defined in s. 287.175 (1) (d), in a solid waste disposal

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1 facility. Such a battery may be disposed of only by delivery to a collection site or
2 collection event operated under a battery stewardship plan under s. 287.175.

3 **SECTION 2.** 287.175 of the statutes is created to read:

4 **287.175 Battery collection and recycling.** (1) **DEFINITIONS.** In this
5 section:

6 (a) “Battery containing product” means a product that contains or is packaged
7 with a covered battery. “Battery containing product” does not include a product
8 that is an eligible electronic device, as defined in s. 287.17 (1) (gs).

9 (b) “Battery stewardship organization” means an entity that has been
10 designated by one or more producers to implement a battery stewardship plan
11 under this section. “Battery stewardship organization” does not include a state
12 agency, as defined in s. 16.004 (12) (a).

13 (c) “Collection rate” means the percentage calculated by dividing the total
14 weight of covered batteries collected in this state by a battery stewardship
15 organization in a calendar year by the average annual weight of covered batteries
16 estimated to have been sold in this state by all producers during that same calendar
17 year and the previous 2 calendar years.

18 (d) “Covered battery” means a portable battery or a medium format battery
19 that is intended or designed to be easily removed, or is capable of being easily
20 removed, using common household tools. “Covered battery” does not include any of
21 the following:

22 1. A battery, contained in a medical device that is regulated under the federal
23 food, drug and cosmetic act, 21 USC 301 to 394, that is not designed or marketed for
24 sale or resale at retail locations for personal use.

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1 2. A battery that contains an electrolyte as a free liquid or a product that
2 contains such a battery.

3 3. A lead acid battery subject to the requirements of s. 287.18 or a product
4 that contains such a battery.

5 4. An alkaline battery in which the electrolyte has a pH value above 7.

6 (e) "Medium format battery" means any of the following:

7 1. For primary batteries, a battery that weighs more than 4.4 pounds but not
8 more than 25 pounds.

9 2. For rechargeable batteries, a battery that weighs more than 11 pounds, or
10 that has a rating of more than 300 watt-hours, or both, but that does not weigh more
11 than 25 pounds or have a rating of more than 2,000 watt-hours.

12 (f) "Portable battery" means any of the following:

13 1. For primary batteries, a battery that weighs no more than 4.4 pounds.

14 2. For rechargeable batteries, a battery that weighs no more than 11 pounds
15 and that has a rating of no more than 300 watt-hours.

16 (g) "Primary battery" means a battery that is not capable of being recharged.

17 (h) 1. "Producer" means a person that sells, offers for sale, or distributes for
18 sale a covered battery or battery containing product in or into this state and that is
19 any of the following:

20 a. If the covered battery or battery containing product is sold under a brand of
21 the battery's or product's manufacturer, the person that manufactures the battery
22 or product.

23 b. If the covered battery or battery containing product is sold under a retail

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1 brand or under a brand owned by a person other than the battery's or product's
2 manufacturer, the person that owns the brand.

3 c. If subd. 1. a. and b. do not apply, the person that is the licensee of a brand or
4 trademark under which the covered battery or battery containing product is sold,
5 offered for sale, or distributed for sale in or into this state, regardless of whether the
6 trademark is registered in this state.

7 d. If subd. 1. a. to c. do not apply to any person within the United States, the
8 person that is the importer of record for the covered battery or battery containing
9 product into the United States for the purpose of selling, offering for sale, or
10 distributing for sale the battery or product in or into this state.

11 2. "Producer" does not include a retailer unless the retailer owns the brand
12 under which a covered battery or battery containing product is sold.

13 (i) "Rechargeable battery" means a battery that contains one or more voltaic
14 or galvanic cells electrically connected to produce electric energy and that is
15 designed to be recharged.

16 (j) "Recycling" means the process by which covered batteries or battery
17 containing products are returned to productive use as material or energy, including
18 the collection and transport of batteries for recycling. "Recycling" does not include
19 destruction by incineration or other processes or land disposal of recyclable
20 materials and does not include reuse, repair, or any other process by which batteries
21 or battery containing products are returned in their original form or in a form for
22 secondary use.

23 (k) "Recycling efficiency rate" means the percentage calculated by dividing the

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1 weight of components and materials recycled by a battery stewardship organization
2 by the weight of covered batteries collected by the battery stewardship organization.

3 (L) "Retailer" means a person that only sells or offers for sale a covered battery
4 or battery containing product in this state. "Retailer" does not include a producer.

5 (2) PROHIBITIONS. (a) Beginning on January 1, 2027, or one year after the
6 effective date of this paragraph [LRB inserts date], whichever occurs first, no
7 producer may sell, offer for sale, or distribute for sale in or into this state any
8 covered battery or battery containing product unless the producer has designated a
9 battery stewardship organization to implement a battery stewardship plan
10 approved by the department under this section and listed by the department on its
11 website under sub. (8) (f) 3. A producer may contract their obligations under this
12 paragraph to another producer if the producer being contracted is a member of a
13 battery stewardship organization in this state.

14 (b) Beginning on January 1, 2027, or one year after the effective date of this
15 paragraph [LRB inserts date], whichever occurs first, no producer may sell, offer
16 for sale, or distribute for sale in or into this state any covered battery or battery
17 containing product unless the covered battery or battery in the battery containing
18 product is marked with an identification of the producer of the battery. This
19 paragraph does not apply if the battery is less than one-half inch in diameter or
20 does not contain a surface with a length that exceeds one-half inch.

21 (c) Beginning on January 1, 2029, no producer may sell, offer for sale, or
22 distribute for sale in or into this state any covered battery or battery containing
23 product unless the covered battery or battery in the battery containing product is
24 marked to ensure proper collection and recycling, by identifying the chemistry of

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1 the battery and including an indication that the battery should not be disposed of as
2 household waste.

3 (d) A producer, retailer, or battery stewardship organization may not charge a
4 point-of-sale fee to consumers to cover the costs of implementing a battery
5 stewardship plan approved under this section.

6 (3) BATTERY STEWARDSHIP PLAN. (a) *Plan submittal.* No later than January
7 1, 2027, or one year after the effective date of this paragraph [LRB inserts date],
8 whichever occurs first, each battery stewardship organization shall submit a
9 battery stewardship plan to the department for approval. A battery stewardship
10 plan approved by the department shall have a term of no more than 5 years and
11 shall include all of the following:

12 1. The names and contact information for each producer that has designated
13 the battery stewardship organization to implement the battery stewardship plan.

14 2. The brands of all of the covered batteries that each producer under subd. 1.
15 sells, offers for sale, or distributes for sale in or into this state. All such brands shall
16 be covered by the battery stewardship plan.

17 3. Performance goals under the plan, and a process for achieving these goals.
18 Performance goals shall include target collection rates for rechargeable batteries
19 and for primary batteries; target recycling efficiency rates of at least 60 percent for
20 rechargeable batteries and 70 percent for primary batteries; and goals for public
21 awareness, convenience, and accessibility. The collection rate goals for each of the
22 first 3 years of implementation of the battery stewardship organization's approved
23 plan shall be based on the estimated total weight of covered batteries that have

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1 been sold in this state in the previous 3 calendar years by the producers
2 participating in the plan.

3 4. A process for making retailers aware of the requirement under sub. (2) (b).

4 5. Consumer awareness goals and a description of the education and outreach
5 strategy that the battery stewardship organization will implement to promote
6 participation in the organization's approved plan and to provide information
7 necessary for the effective participation of consumers, retailers, and others.

8 6. A process for making available to collection sites, for voluntary use,
9 signage, written materials, and other promotional materials to inform consumers of
10 the available end-of-life management options for covered batteries collected under
11 the battery stewardship organization's approved plan.

12 7. Collection site safety training procedures related to covered battery
13 collection activities at collection sites, including a description of operating protocols
14 to reduce risks of spills or fires, response protocols in the event of a spill or fire, and
15 protocols for safe management of damaged batteries that are returned to collection
16 sites.

17 8. A method for fully funding the battery stewardship organization's approved
18 plan in a manner that equitably distributes the plan's costs among the producers
19 under subd. 1. on the basis of each producer's actual share of covered batteries
20 collected under the plan.

21 9. Provisions for collecting covered batteries at no cost, regardless of the brand
22 or producer of the covered battery, on a continuous, convenient, visible, and
23 accessible basis.

24 10. The addresses of collection sites that will accept covered batteries under

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1 the plan, and the criteria used to determine whether an entity may serve as a
2 collection site.

3 11. The names of proposed service providers, including sorters, transporters,
4 and processors, to be used for the final disposition of batteries.

5 12. Provisions for recordkeeping, tracking, and documenting the management
6 and disposition of collected covered batteries.

7 13. An explanation for any delay anticipated by the battery stewardship
8 organization in managing medium-format batteries.

9 (c) *Plan expiration and resubmittal.* A battery stewardship organization shall
10 submit a new plan to the department for approval no less than every 5 years. If the
11 performance goals under the previously approved plan have not been met, the new
12 plan shall include corrective measures to be implemented by the battery
13 stewardship organization to meet those performance goals, which may include
14 improvements to the collection site network or increased expenditures dedicated to
15 education and outreach.

16 (d) *Plan amendments.* A battery stewardship organization shall provide plan
17 amendments to the department for approval when proposing material changes to
18 the approved plan.

19 (e) *Notification of certain changes.* A battery stewardship organization
20 implementing a plan approved under this section shall notify the department
21 within 90 days of a producer beginning or ceasing participation in the battery
22 stewardship organization, or within 90 days of adding or removing a processor or
23 transporter under the approved plan.

24 (f) *More than one battery stewardship organization; cost sharing.* 1. The

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1 department may approve plans under this section from more than one battery
2 stewardship organization.

3 2. The department may approve plans that equitably share the costs, among
4 other battery stewardship organizations, of implementing the parts of those plans
5 that benefit such organizations.

6 **(4) COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT.** (a) *Costs of implementation.* A battery
7 stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under sub. (3) is
8 responsible for all costs associated with implementing the plan, unless the approved
9 plan allows for cost sharing among other battery stewardship organizations with
10 approved plans, as provided under sub. (3) (f).

11 (b) *Reimbursement of local governments.* A battery stewardship organization
12 implementing a plan approved under this section shall reimburse local
13 governmental units for actual costs incurred as a result of a local government
14 facility or solid waste facility serving as a collection site under the plan.

15 (c) *Collecting fees from producers.* A battery stewardship organization
16 implementing a plan approved under this section shall collect fees from
17 participating producers sufficient to cover the costs of implementation, including
18 battery collection, transportation, and processing; education and outreach; and
19 program evaluation. Any fees charged to a producer by a battery stewardship
20 organization shall be reasonable and represent, to the greatest extent possible,
21 actual costs of administering the battery stewardship plan.

22 **(5) COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF COVERED BATTERIES.** (a) A battery
23 stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under this section shall do
24 all of the following:

1 1. Provide for the collection of all covered batteries from any person,
2 regardless of the chemistry or brand of the battery, on a free, continuous,
3 convenient, visible, and accessible basis.

4 2. Provide to collection sites under the plan, at no cost to the sites, suitable
5 collection containers for covered batteries that are segregated from other solid
6 waste, or make alternative arrangements for the collection of such batteries at the
7 site, with the agreement of the collection site.

8 3. Ensure that medium format batteries are collected only at household
9 hazardous waste collection sites or other staffed collection sites that meet
10 applicable federal, state, and local requirements for managing medium format
11 batteries.

12 4. Provide for the collection of damaged and defective batteries, by persons
13 trained to handle and ship such batteries, at collection sites and at each permanent
14 household hazardous waste facility and each household hazardous waste collection
15 event provided by the department. In this paragraph, "damaged and defective
16 batteries" means batteries that are damaged or that have been identified by the
17 manufacturer as being defective for safety reasons, and that have the potential to
18 produce a dangerous evolution of heat, fire, or short circuit.

19 5. Ensure statewide collection opportunities for all covered batteries.

20 6. Coordinate activities with others, such as electronic waste recyclers and
21 other battery stewardship plan operators, to provide efficient delivery of services
22 and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and expense. A battery stewardship
23 organization shall use existing public and private waste collection services and
24 facilities, transporters, consolidators, processors, and retailers if cost-effective,

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1 mutually agreeable, and otherwise practical. Participation by public and private
2 waste collection services and facilities, transporters, consolidators, processors, and
3 retailers shall be voluntary.

4 7. For portable batteries, provide, no later than December 31, 2028, at least
5 one permanent collection site within a 15-mile radius for at least 95 percent of state
6 residents.

7 8. For medium format batteries, provide all of the following no later than
8 December 31, 2028:

9 a. At least 10 permanent collection sites in this state.

10 b. Collection sites that are reasonably dispersed throughout this state.

11 c. A collection event at least once every 3 years in each county that does not
12 have a permanent collection site, which must provide for the collection of all
13 medium format batteries, including damaged and defective medium format
14 batteries.

15 9. Use as a collection site or the site of a collection event any entity that meets
16 the criteria for a collection site or collection event under an approved battery
17 stewardship plan and that requests to serve as a collection site or collection event,
18 up to the number of collection sites required to comply with subds. 7. and 8.

19 (b) A battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under
20 this section may issue a warning to, suspend, or terminate a collection site or
21 service that does not comply with the criteria under the approved plan or that poses
22 an immediate concern to health and safety.

23 (c) A battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under
24 this section is not required to provide for the collection of recalled batteries, battery

1 containing products, or covered batteries that remain contained in a battery
2 containing product at the time of delivery to a collection site or collection event. A
3 battery stewardship organization may seek reimbursement from the producer of a
4 recalled battery for the costs incurred in collecting, transporting, or processing such
5 batteries. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a manufacturer of
6 a covered battery or battery containing product from conducting a recall or
7 assisting a battery stewardship organization in conducting a recall.

8 **(6) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.** (a) A battery stewardship organization
9 implementing a plan approved under this section shall do all of the following to
10 promote the implementation of the plan:

11 1. Develop and maintain a website.

12 2. Develop and distribute collection site safety training procedures to
13 collection sites to help ensure proper management of covered batteries at collection
14 sites.

15 3. Provide consumer-focused educational materials, to each collection site
16 used under the plan, that are accessible by customers of retailers that sell covered
17 batteries or battery containing products.

18 4. Provide safety information related to covered battery collection activities to
19 the operator of each collection site used under the plan, including appropriate
20 protocols to reduce risks of spills or fires, to respond to a spill or fire, and to manage
21 a collected damaged or defective battery.

22 5. Provide educational materials to the operator of each collection site used
23 under the plan for the management of recalled batteries.

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1 6. Upon request by a retailer or other potential collection site, provide
2 educational materials describing collection opportunities for covered batteries.

3 7. Coordinate with other battery stewardship organizations implementing a
4 plan approved under this section, if applicable, in providing education and outreach
5 under this subsection.

6 (b) A battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under
7 this section may do all of the following to promote the implementation of the plan:

8 1. Develop and distribute periodic press releases and articles.
9 2. Develop and place advertisements for use on social media or other relevant
10 media platforms.

11 3. Develop promotional materials about the program and about the restriction
12 on disposing covered batteries under sub. (11).

13 4. Conduct a survey, during the first year of implementing an approved plan
14 and every 5 years thereafter, of public awareness of the provisions of this section.
15 The battery stewardship organization shall share the results of the surveys with
16 the department.

17 **(7) ANNUAL AUDIT AND REPORTING.** (a) No later than June 1, 2029, and each
18 June 1 thereafter, a battery stewardship organization implementing a plan
19 approved under this section shall hire an independent 3rd party to conduct a full
20 audit of the battery stewardship plan and the plan's operation. The audit shall
21 disclose the battery stewardship organization's revenue, expenditures, and
22 liabilities relating to its activities in this state. The auditor shall examine the
23 effectiveness of the battery stewardship plan in collecting and recycling covered
24 batteries that are primary batteries. The auditor shall also examine the cost-

ASSEMBLY BILL 713**SECTION 2**

1 effectiveness of the plan and compare it to that of other approved plans in this state
2 or to battery stewardship plans in other states. The battery stewardship
3 organization shall submit the results of the annual audit to the department along
4 with an annual report for the same year that contains all of the following:

5 1. An independent financial assessment of implementing the plan, including
6 a breakdown of the plan's expenses, such as collection expenses, recycling expenses,
7 education expenses, and overhead expenses.

8 2. The weight, by chemistry, of covered batteries collected under the plan.

9 3. The weight of materials recycled from covered batteries collected under the
10 plan, in total, and by method of battery recycling.

11 4. A calculation of the recycling efficiency rate under the plan.

12 5. A list of all facilities used in the processing or disposition of covered
13 batteries under the plan and, for domestic facilities, a summary of any violations of
14 environmental laws and regulations during the previous 3 years at each facility.

15 6. For each facility used for the final disposition of covered batteries under the
16 plan, a description of how the facility recycled or otherwise managed batteries and
17 battery components.

18 7. The weight and chemistry of covered batteries sent to each facility that is
19 used for the final disposition of batteries. This information may be approximated
20 on the basis of extrapolations of national or regional data for programs in operation
21 in multiple states.

22 8. The collection rate achieved under the plan, including a description of how
23 this collection rate was calculated and how it compares to the collection rate goals
24 under the plan.

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1 9. The estimated aggregate sales, by weight and chemistry, of covered
2 batteries, including covered batteries contained in or packaged with battery
3 containing products, sold in this state by the battery stewardship organization's
4 participating producers for each of the previous 3 calendar years.

5 10. A description of how collected batteries were managed and recycled,
6 including a discussion of best available technologies and the recycling efficiency
7 rate.

8 11. A description of education and outreach efforts supporting plan
9 implementation, including a summary of education and outreach provided to
10 consumers, collection sites, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to promote
11 the collection and recycling of covered batteries; a description of how that education
12 and outreach met the requirements of sub. (6); samples of education and outreach
13 materials; a summary of coordinated education and outreach efforts with any other
14 battery stewardship organizations implementing a plan approved under this
15 section; and a summary of any changes made during the previous calendar year to
16 education and outreach activities.

17 12. A list of all collection sites and an address for each listed site, and an up-
18 to-date map indicating the location of all collection sites used to implement the
19 plan, with links to websites when available.

20 13. A description of methods used to collect, transport, and recycle covered
21 batteries under the plan.

22 14. A summary of progress made toward the performance goals under the
23 plan, and an explanation of why performance goals were not met, if applicable.

24 15. An evaluation of the effectiveness of education and outreach activities.

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1 16. If a battery stewardship organization has disposed of covered batteries
2 through energy recovery, incineration, or landfilling during the preceding calendar
3 year of plan implementation, the steps that the battery stewardship organization
4 will take to make the recycling of covered batteries cost-effective, when possible, or
5 to otherwise increase battery recycling efficiency rates achieved by the battery
6 stewardship organization.

7 (b) A battery stewardship organization implementing a plan approved under
8 this section shall make each annual audit and report under par. (a) available on its
9 website and provide printed or electronic copies upon request.

10 (8) DEPARTMENT DUTIES AND AUTHORITY. (a) *Plan approvals.* Within 120
11 days after receiving a proposed battery stewardship plan or proposed amendment
12 under sub. (3) (a) or (d), the department shall approve, conditionally approve, or
13 deny the plan or amendment. The department shall approve any plan or
14 amendment that meets the requirements under sub. (3). If the department denies
15 or conditionally approves a plan or amendment, the department shall notify the
16 battery stewardship organization of the denial or conditional approval in writing
17 and explain how the proposed plan or amendment does not comply with this
18 section; the producer shall submit a revised plan or amendment or notice of plan
19 withdrawal within 60 days of the denial or conditional approval; and the
20 department shall approve or deny the revised plan or amendment within 90 days of
21 resubmittal.

22 (b) *Public notice.* The department shall publish notice on its website and shall
23 provide notice, upon request, to interested persons, announcing any proposed plan
24 or amendment under sub. (3) (a) or (d).

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1 (c) *Enforcement.* The department may, in addition to any penalties
2 authorized under sub. (12), enforce violations of this section and violations of any
3 battery stewardship plan approved under this section. For purposes of this
4 paragraph, a failure to meet the requirements of this section despite a good faith
5 effort is not a violation.

6 (d) *Reports.* The department shall review reports submitted under sub. (7)
7 within 90 days after submission.

8 (e) *Assistance.* The department shall provide technical assistance to
9 producers and retailers related to the requirements under this section.

10 (f) *Website.* Subject to par. (g), the department shall maintain on its website
11 all of the following:

12 1. A copy of all approved battery stewardship plans and any amendments to
13 such plans.

14 2. The names of producers with approved battery stewardship plans.

15 3. A list of brands of covered batteries covered under an approved battery
16 stewardship plan. The department shall update this list only twice annually.

17 4. Reports submitted to the department under sub. (7).

18 (g) *Confidentiality.* Proprietary information submitted to the department
19 under this section may not be open to public inspection and copying under s. 19.35
20 (1). The department and any other agency may not release, publish, or otherwise
21 make available any proprietary information received under this section. In this
22 paragraph, “proprietary information” means information owned or held by a
23 producer and includes trade secrets, intellectual property, production methods,
24 marketing strategies, business plans, financial data of a business, customer lists,

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1 data from research and development, and any other sensitive information about a
2 business or a business's practices.

3 **(10) INDEPENDENT BATTERY COLLECTION.** Nothing in this section prevents or
4 prohibits a person from offering or performing a fee-based household collection
5 program or a mail-back program for covered batteries independently of a battery
6 stewardship plan under this section if the services are performed and any facilities
7 are operated in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and
8 requirements.

9 **(11) INDIVIDUAL BATTERY DISPOSAL.** (a) Beginning on January 1, 2028, all of
10 the following apply:

11 1. A person may dispose of a covered battery only by delivery to a collection
12 site or collection event operated under a battery stewardship plan approved under
13 this section, unless the battery is regulated as hazardous waste.

14 2. No person may knowingly cause or allow the mixing of a covered battery
15 with recyclable materials that are intended for processing and sorting at a material
16 recovery facility.

17 3. No person may knowingly cause or allow the mixing of a covered battery
18 with municipal waste that is intended for disposal at a landfill.

19 4. No person may knowingly cause or allow the disposal of a covered battery in
20 a landfill.

21 5. No person may knowingly cause or allow the mixing of a covered battery
22 with waste that is intended for burning or incineration.

23 6. No person may knowingly cause or allow the burning or incineration of a
24 covered battery.

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(b) An owner or operator of a solid waste facility may not be found in violation of this section if the facility has posted in a conspicuous location a sign stating that covered batteries must be managed through collection sites established by a battery stewardship organization and are not accepted for disposal.

(c) A solid waste collector may not be found in violation of this section for a covered battery placed in a disposal container by a 3rd party.

(12) PENALTIES. (a) Any person that intentionally and substantially violates this section, other than sub. (11), may be required to forfeit not more than \$7,000 for each violation. For purposes of this paragraph, a failure to meet the requirements of this section despite a good faith effort is not a violation.

(c) The attorney general or the district attorney of any county in which a violation of this section occurs may, in addition to any other penalty, bring an action to enjoin any person from violating this section, other than sub. (11).

(d) A retailer is not subject to any penalty under this section.

(13) RULE MAKING. Notwithstanding s. 227.11 (2), nothing in this section shall be construed to confer rule-making authority on the department.

SECTION 3. Nonstatutory provisions.

(1) ASSESSMENT OF BATTERY CONTAINING PRODUCTS. No later than July 1, 2027, a battery stewardship organization, as defined in s. 287.175 (1) (b), implementing a battery stewardship plan approved under s. 287.175 shall submit a report to the department of natural resources on any assessments prepared in other states, if available, of the opportunities and challenges associated with the end-of-life management of portable batteries, as defined in s. 287.175 (1) (f), and medium format batteries, as defined in s. 287.175 (1) (e), that are not intended or designed to

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1 be easily removed by a customer and that are contained either in battery containing
2 products, as defined in s. 287.175 (1) (a), medical devices, or electronic products
3 that are not eligible electronic devices, as defined in s. 287.17 (1) (gs). The
4 department of natural resources shall submit this report, to the chief clerk of each
5 house of the legislature, for distribution to the appropriate standing committees of
6 the legislature in the manner required under s. 13.172 (3), with recommendations
7 as to whether s. 287.175 could be applied to batteries that are not intended or
8 designed to be easily removed by a customer in a manner that is identical or
9 analogous to the provisions of s. 287.175 applicable to covered batteries, as defined
10 in s. 287.175 (1) (d).

11

(END)



State of Wisconsin

2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-5440/1
ES/ZW/MM/ME:skw

2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 722

December 3, 2025 - Introduced by Representatives STROUD, MIRESSE, PALMERI, BARE, ANDERSON, ANDRACA, BILLINGS, DESMIDT, EMERSON, FITZGERALD, GOODWIN, HONG, JOERS, MADISON, MAYADEV, MCCARVILLE, MOORE OMOKUNDE, NEUBAUER, RIVERA-WAGNER, ROE, SHEEHAN, SINICKI, SNODGRASS, STUBBS, SUBECK, TENORIO, UDELL and Vining, cosponsored by Senators HABUSH SINYKIN, SPREITZER, KEYESKI, CARPENTER, DASSLER-ALFHEIM, DRAKE, HESSELBEIN, LARSON, PFAFF, RATCLIFF, ROYS and WALL. Referred to Committee on Energy and Utilities.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 16.957 (2) (d) 3., 25.96 and 238.40 (2) (b); **to create** 16.296,
2 16.957 (2) (a) 5., 20.505 (1) (gj), 66.0443, 101.028, 103.08, 196.03 (7), 196.03
3 (8), 196.493, 196.498, 238.40 (1) (am) and 238.40 (1) (b) 3. of the statutes;
4 **relating to:** large energy customer fees; electric utility very large customer
5 class; a renewable resource tariff; building requirements for data centers;
6 water usage by large customers; required pay rate on large-scale data center
7 projects; and granting rule-making authority.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill imposes requirements relating to certain electric utility tariffs and to data centers and large energy customers of utilities. In the bill, "data center" is defined as one or more buildings or an array of connected buildings owned, leased, or operated by the same business entity or its affiliate that are rehabilitated or constructed to house a group of networked server computers in one physical location or multiple locations in order to centralize the processing, storage, management, retrieval, communication, or dissemination of data and information. Current law defines "large energy customer" as a customer of an energy utility that owns or operates a facility in the energy utility's service area that has an energy demand of

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at least 1,000 kilowatts of electricity per month or of at least 10,000 decatherms of natural gas per month and that, in a month, is billed at least \$60,000 for electric service, natural gas service, or both, for all of the facilities of the customer within the energy utility's service territory.

Required pay rate

The bill provides that laborers and mechanics who perform work to construct or refurbish large-scale data centers must be paid either the prevailing wage rate or, if the laborer or mechanic is covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the higher of the prevailing wage rate or the wage rate under the collective bargaining agreement. Under the bill, "prevailing wage rate" has the meaning given under the federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. The bill also defines "large-scale data center" as a data center that consists in the aggregate of at least 25,000 square feet and for which the total cost of construction or refurbishment, investment in enterprise information technology equipment, and computer software incurred within any 60-month period beginning on July 1, 2026, is at least \$250,000,000. Under the bill, the prevailing wage rate may not be less than a reasonable and living wage.

The bill also provides that in order for large-scale data centers to be certified by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation for exemptions from sales and use taxes, the development, construction, renovation, expansion, replacement, or repair of the data center must meet the prevailing wage requirements and at least 70 percent of the total annual electric energy used by the data center must be derived from renewable resources.

Building requirements for data centers

The bill provides that the owner or operator of a data center must certify to the Department of Safety and Professional Services that the data center has attained certification under one of several specified sustainable design or green building standards. The owner or operator of the data center must make this certification no later than three years after the data center begins operating.

Water usage

Under the bill, a water utility must notify the Public Service Commission if a new customer of the water utility plans to use an amount of water that would account for 25 percent of the total water usage of all water customers of the water utility, or if an existing customer of a water utility plans to increase its water usage to an extent that its water usage will account for 25 percent of the total water usage of all water customers of the water utility.

Under the bill, a political subdivision must require the owner or operator of a data center located in the political subdivision to record and report the actual water usage by the data center no later than one year after the data center is operational and annually thereafter. Once the data center reports this information, the bill requires the political subdivision to report it on its website, if available, or by publishing class 1 notice.

Large energy customer fee

The bill requires the Department of Administration to collect an annual fee

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from each large energy customer on a schedule prescribed by DOA. The bill provides that DOA must deposit 50 percent of these fees into the utility public benefits fund, which, under current law, funds energy efficiency, renewable energy, low-income energy assistance, and other public benefits programs and must pay the other 50 percent of the fees to Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation for the purpose of supporting the Green Innovation Fund.

Very large customer class

The bill requires PSC to establish by order the definition and appropriate characteristics of a very large customer class or subclass for each electric utility. The bill requires any electric utility that offers a tariff or contract rate to a very large customer to file a rate case application with PSC by April 1 of every other year. In such a rate case, the bill requires the electric utility to provide information, according to rules promulgated by PSC, necessary for PSC to determine the total costs the electric utility incurs, and is forecasted to incur, in providing service to the very large customer under the tariff or contract rate. Considering the information provided by the electric utility, the bill requires PSC to determine if the rates charged to the very large customer are just and reasonable or whether they are unreasonable, preferential, or unjustly discriminatory. If deemed unreasonable, preferential, or unjustly discriminatory, the bill requires PSC to adjust rates or modify the terms of service for the very large customer in a manner appropriate to make the rates just and reasonable.

Renewable resource tariff and reporting

Under the bill, PSC must require each electric utility to offer an optional renewable resource tariff for commercial and industrial customers. The bill requires that such a tariff be offered under a contract that does all of the following:

1. Permits the participating customers to elect to serve some or all of their energy usage from new renewable resources provided that reliability is maintained.
2. Requires the participating customers to pay all proportional costs associated with the addition of new renewable resources to the electric utility's grid, including any utility costs caused by the addition of the new renewable resources to the grid.
3. Includes an appropriate energy credit.
4. Prohibits the electric utility from shifting costs from the participating customers to other utility customers or vice versa.
5. If the electric utility has an applicable tariff on file with PSC, allows the electric utility to demonstrate that its existing tariff complies with these requirements.

The bill requires an energy utility to submit to PSC quarterly reports identifying certain information regarding each data center within its service territory, including the amount of energy consumed, the fuel type used to generate the energy, the amount of renewable energy generated at the site of the data center, the number of renewable energy credits purchased for the data center, and the amount of energy directly procured for the data center. PSC must publish on its website aggregate data from the reports required under the bill.

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For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 16.296 of the statutes is created to read:

2 **16.296 Large energy customer fee.** (1) In this section:

3 (a) "Energy utility" has the meaning given in s. 196.374 (1) (e).

4 (b) "Green innovation fund" means the green bank, known as the green
5 innovation fund, administered by the Wisconsin Economic Development
6 Corporation in collaboration with the department of administration based on the
7 advice of the governor's Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and
8 Environmental Innovation established by executive order 195, issued April 19,
9 2023.

10 (c) "Large energy customer" has the meaning given in s. 196.374 (1) (em).

11 (d) "Peak electricity demand forecast" means the amount of electricity
12 forecast to be used by a large energy customer at the moment during the
13 subsequent 12 months when the large energy customer is forecast to be at its
14 highest demand for electricity.

15 (2) Each customer of an energy utility that qualifies as a large energy
16 customer shall notify the department of that qualification in the manner
17 determined by the department.

18 (3) The department shall collect an annual fee from each large energy
19 customer on a schedule prescribed by the department. Upon request, a large
20 energy customer shall submit to the department its peak electricity demand

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1 forecast. For each large energy customer, the department shall base the amount of
2 the annual fee under this subsection on the large energy customer's peak electricity
3 demand forecast as follows:

4 (a) For a peak electricity demand forecast of at least 100 megawatts but less
5 than 250 megawatts, \$2,000,000.

6 (b) For a peak electricity demand forecast of at least 250 megawatts but less
7 than 500 megawatts, \$3,000,000.

8 (c) For a peak electricity demand forecast that falls within each subsequent
9 250-megawatt increment beginning at 500 megawatts, an additional \$1,000,000.

10 (4) The department shall pay 50 percent of the fees collected under sub. (2) to
11 the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation for the purpose of supporting
12 the green innovation fund as it existed on January 1, 2025.

13 **SECTION 2.** 16.957 (2) (a) 5. of the statutes is created to read:

14 16.957 (2) (a) 5. The fees received under s. 16.296 (2) and deposited in the
15 utility public benefits fund under s. 16.957 (2) (d) 3.

16 **SECTION 3.** 16.957 (2) (d) 3. of the statutes is amended to read:

17 16.957 (2) (d) 3. Deposit all moneys received under sub. (4) (a) or (5) (b) 2. and
18 50 percent of all fees received under s. 16.296 (2) in the utility public benefits fund.

19 **SECTION 4.** 20.505 (1) (gj) of the statutes is created to read:

20 20.505 (1) (gj) *Green innovation fund.* Fifty percent of the amounts received
21 from fees collected under s. 16.296 (2) for the purpose of paying the Wisconsin
22 Economic Development Corporation as provided under s. 16.296 (3).

23 **SECTION 5.** 25.96 of the statutes is amended to read:

24 **25.96 Utility public benefits fund.** There is established a separate

1 nonlapsible trust fund designated as the utility public benefits fund, consisting of
2 low-income assistance fees received under s. 16.957 (4) (a) and (5) (b) 2., 50 percent
3 of all large energy customer fees received under s. 16.296 (2), and all moneys
4 received under s. 196.374 (3) (b) 4.

5 **SECTION 6.** 66.0443 of the statutes is created to read:

6 **66.0443 Data centers.** (1) In this section:

7 (a) "Data center" has the meaning given in s. 103.08 (1) (a).

8 (b) "Political subdivision" means a city, village, town, or county.

9 (2) A political subdivision shall require the owner or operator of a data center
10 located in the political subdivision to record and report the actual water usage by
11 the data center no later than one year after the data center is operational and
12 annually thereafter. Once the data center reports the actual water usage, the
13 political subdivision shall report the actual water usage on its website, if available,
14 or by publishing a class 1 notice under ch. 985.

15 **SECTION 7.** 101.028 of the statutes is created to read:

16 **101.028 Building requirements for data centers.** (1) In this section,
17 "data center" has the meaning given in s. 103.08 (1) (a).

18 (2) The owner or operator of a data center shall, no later than 3 years after the
19 data center begins operating, certify to the department that the data center has
20 attained certification under any of the following sustainable design or green
21 building standards:

22 (a) BREEAM International New or BREEAM USA In-use.

23 (b) Energy Star.

24 (c) Envision.

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- 1 (d) ISO 50001.
- 2 (e) LEED for Building Design and Construction or LEED for Operations and
- 3 Maintenance.
- 4 (f) Green Globes for New Construction or Green Globes for Existing Buildings.
- 5 (g) UL 3223.
- 6 (h) Any other reasonable standard approved by the department.

7 SECTION 8. 103.08 of the statutes is created to read:

103.08 Required wage rate on large-scale data center construction or refurbishment. (1) **DEFINITIONS.** In this section:

19 1. Servers and routers.

20 2. Cooling systems, cooling towers, and other temperature control
21 infrastructure.

22 3. Power infrastructure for transformation, distribution, or management of
23 electricity used for the maintenance and operation of a data center, including

1 exterior dedicated business-owned substations, backup power generation systems,
2 and battery systems and related infrastructure.

3 4. Racking systems, cabling, and trays that are necessary for the maintenance
4 and operation of the data center.

5 (c) “Hourly basic rate of pay” means the hourly wage rate paid to any
6 employee.

7 (d) “Large-scale data center” means a data center that consists in the
8 aggregate of at least 25,000 square feet and for which the total cost of construction
9 or refurbishment, investment in enterprise information technology equipment, and
10 computer software incurred within any 60-month period beginning on July 1, 2026,
11 is at least \$250,000,000.

12 (e) “Prevailing wage rate” has the meaning described in section 45 (b) (7) (A) of
13 the Internal Revenue Code, as amended to August 16, 2022.

14 (2) REQUIRED WAGE RATE. In this subsection, “refurbish” does not include
15 maintenance, refreshing equipment, or replacing equipment. Except as provided in
16 this subsection, after the effective date of this subsection [LRB inserts date],
17 laborers and mechanics who perform work to construct or refurbish large-scale data
18 centers shall be paid the prevailing wage rate. If a laborer or mechanic is covered by
19 a collective bargaining agreement, the laborer or mechanic shall be paid the higher
20 of the prevailing wage rate or the applicable wage rate under the collective
21 bargaining agreement.

22 **SECTION 9.** 196.03 (7) of the statutes is created to read:

23 196.03 (7) (a) In this subsection:

24 1. “Electric utility” has the meaning given in s. 196.378 (1) (d).

ASSEMBLY BILL 722**SECTION 9**

1 2. “Very large customer” has the meaning assigned by the commission to a
2 class or subclass of an electric utility’s customers by order under par. (b).

3 (b) By December 15, 2027, the commission shall establish by order the
4 definition and appropriate characteristics of a very large customer class or subclass
5 for each electric utility. The commission may satisfy the requirement under this
6 paragraph in a rate case for the electric utility or in another proceeding.

7 (c) Any electric utility that offers a tariff or contract rate to a very large
8 customer shall file a rate case application with the commission by April 1 of every
9 other year. The chair of the commission may issue a waiver of the rate case
10 application filing deadline if the electric utility demonstrates exceptional
11 circumstances that necessitate such a waiver.

12 (d) In a rate case under par. (c), the electric utility shall provide information
13 necessary for the commission to determine the total costs the electric utility incurs,
14 and is forecasted to incur, in providing service to the very large customer under the
15 tariff or contract rate. The commission shall promulgate rules to establish the
16 specific requirements electric utilities shall follow to justify how the current or
17 proposed rates in a rate case under this subsection pay for the cost of providing
18 service to a very large customer. Considering the information provided by the
19 electric utility, the commission shall determine if the rates charged to the very large
20 customer are just and reasonable under sub. (1) and whether they are
21 unreasonable, preferential, or unjustly discriminatory under s. 196.37. If deemed
22 unreasonable, preferential, or unjustly discriminatory, the commission shall adjust
23 rates or modify the terms of service for the very large customer in a manner
24 appropriate to bring the rates into compliance with sub. (1) and s. 196.37.

1 **SECTION 10.** 196.03 (8) of the statutes is created to read:

2 **196.03 (8) RENEWABLE RESOURCE TARIFF.** (a) In this subsection:

3 1. “Electric utility” has the meaning given in s. 196.378 (1) (d).

4 2. “Renewable resource” has the meaning given in s. 196.378 (1) (h).

5 (b) The commission shall require each electric utility to offer an optional
6 renewable resource tariff for commercial and industrial customers under a contract
7 that does all of the following:

8 1. Permits the participating customers to elect to serve some or all of their
9 energy usage from new renewable resources provided that reliability is maintained.

10 2. Requires the participating customers to pay all proportional costs
11 associated with the addition of new renewable resources to the electric utility’s grid,
12 including any utility costs caused by the addition of the new renewable resources to
13 the grid.

14 3. Includes an appropriate energy credit.

15 4. Prohibits the electric utility from shifting costs from the participating
16 customers to other utility customers or vice versa.

17 5. If the electric utility has an applicable tariff on file with the commission,
18 allows the electric utility to demonstrate that its existing tariff complies with this
19 subsection.

20 **SECTION 11.** 196.493 of the statutes is created to read:

21 **196.493 Data center energy source reports.** (1) **DEFINITIONS.** In this
22 section:

23 (a) “Data center” has the meaning given in s. 103.08 (1) (a).

24 (b) “Energy utility” has the meaning given in s. 196.374 (1) (e).

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1 **(2) REPORT REQUIRED.** Each quarter, an energy utility shall submit to the
2 commission, in the manner provided by the commission, a report that satisfies all of
3 the following with respect to each data center within the energy utility's service
4 territory:

5 (a) The report identifies the amount of energy, disaggregated by the fuel type
6 used to generate the energy, consumed by the data center in the previous quarter.

7 (b) The report identifies the amount of renewable energy, as defined in s.
8 196.378 (1) (fg), generated at the site of the data center.

9 (c) The report identifies the amount of energy directly procured for the data
10 center in the previous quarter.

11 (d) The report identifies the amount of any renewable energy credits
12 purchased for the data center for the previous quarter.

13 **(3) COMMISSION PUBLICATION.** The commission shall publish on its website
14 aggregate data from the reports received under sub. (2), but the commission may
15 not publish any personally identifying information contained in a report received
16 under sub. (2).

17 **SECTION 12.** 196.498 of the statutes is created to read:

18 **196.498 Water usage by large customers.** If a new customer of a water
19 utility plans to use an amount of water that would account for 25 percent of the
20 total water usage of all water customers of the water utility, or if an existing
21 customer of a water utility plans to increase its water usage to an extent that its
22 water usage will account for 25 percent of the total water usage of all water
23 customers of the water utility, the water utility shall notify the commission of the
24 anticipated water consumption increase.

1 **SECTION 13.** 238.40 (1) (am) of the statutes is created to read:

2 238.40 (1) (am) “Large-scale data center” has the meaning given in s. 103.08
3 (1) (d).

4 **SECTION 14.** 238.40 (1) (b) 3. of the statutes is created to read:

5 238.40 (1) (b) 3. The development, construction, renovation, expansion,
6 replacement, or repair of the buildings meets the requirements of s. 103.08 (2) and
7 at least 70 percent of the total annual electric energy used by the buildings is
8 derived from renewable resources, as defined under s. 16.75 (12) (a) 4., if the
9 buildings are a large-scale data center.

10 **SECTION 15.** 238.40 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

11 238.40 (2) (b) If the corporation certifies a qualified data center for purposes
12 of the sales and use tax exemption under s. 77.54 (70) and the data center fails to
13 satisfy sub. (1) (b) 2. and, if the data center is a large-scale data center, sub. (1) (b)
14 3., the corporation shall revoke the certification. The contract between the
15 corporation and the business entity shall include recapture provisions. The
16 corporation may grant an extension of time within which the qualified data center
17 may avoid revocation by satisfying the ~~applicable qualified investment requirement~~
18 requirements under sub. (1) (b) 2. and, if the data center is a large-scale data center,
19 sub. (1) (b) 3.

20 **SECTION 16. Initial applicability.**

21 (1) ELECTRIC SERVICE TO VERY LARGE CUSTOMERS. The treatment of s. 196.03
22 (7) first applies to a tariff or agreement submitted to the commission for its review
23 on the effective date of this subsection.

24 **SECTION 17. Effective date.**

ASSEMBLY BILL 722

1 (1) DATA CENTERS SALES AND USE TAX EXEMPTION. The treatment of s. 238.40
2 (1) (b) 3. and (2) (b) takes effect on the first day of the 3rd month beginning after
3 publication.

(END)

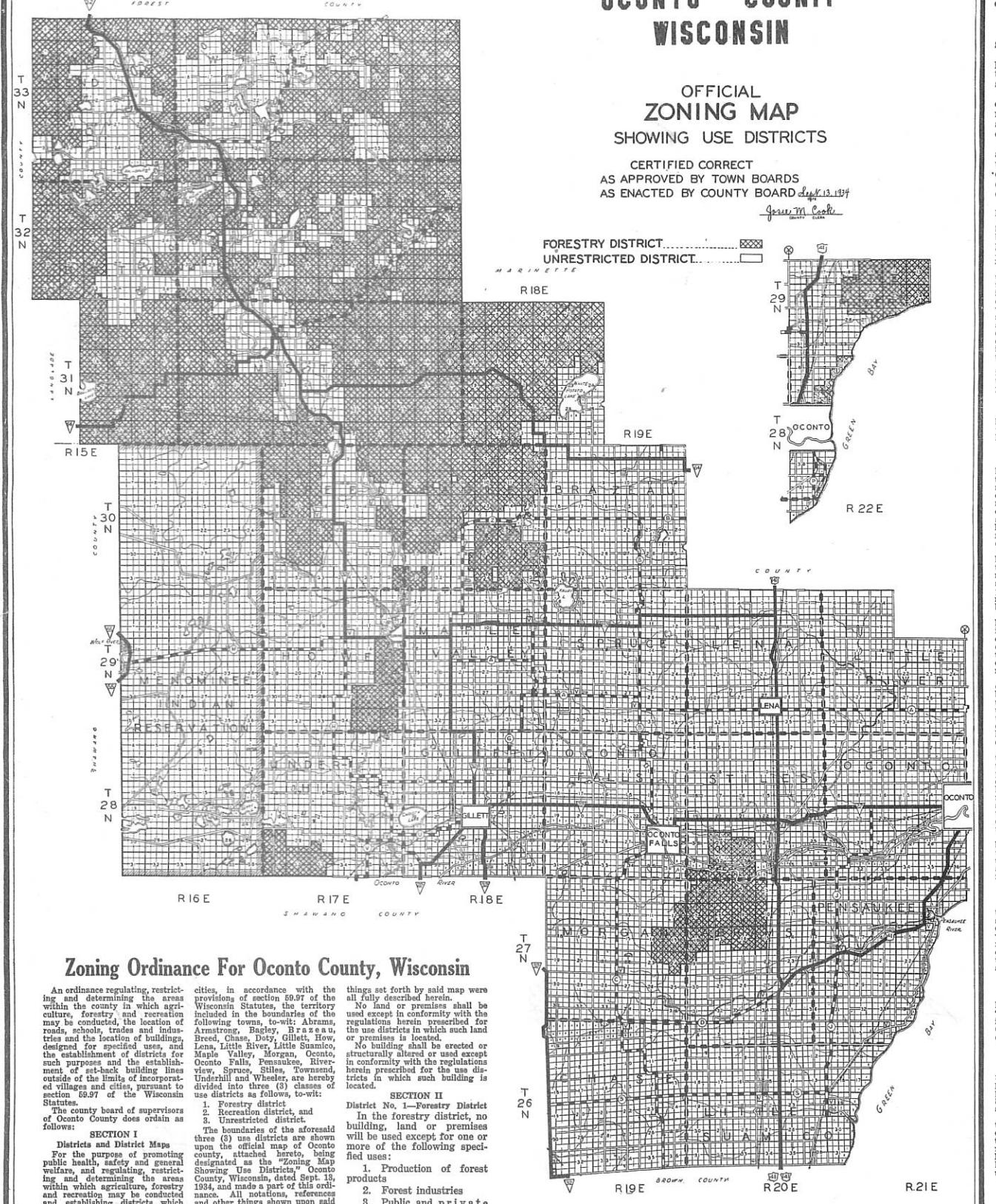
OCONTO COUNTY WISCONSIN

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP SHOWING USE DISTRICTS

CERTIFIED CORRECT
AS APPROVED BY TOWN BOARDS
AS ENACTED BY COUNTY BOARD *Sept 13, 1934*

James M. Cook
County Clerk

FORESTRY DISTRICT
UNRESTRICTED DISTRICT



Zoning Ordinance For Oconto County, Wisconsin

An ordinance regulating, restricting and controlling the uses within the county in which agriculture, forestry, and recreation may be conducted, the location of roads, schools, trades, industries and the location of buildings designed for specified uses, and the establishment of districts for such purposes, and the establishment of boundaries between lands outside the limits of incorporated villages and cities, pursuant to section 69.97 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The county board of supervisors of Oconto County does ordain as follows:

SECTION I

District and District Maps

For the purpose of promoting

public health, safety and general welfare, and regulating, restricting, and determining the areas within which agriculture, forestry and recreation may be conducted and establishing districts which are deemed best suited to carry out such purposes, outside of the limits of incorporated villages and

cities, in accordance with the things set forth by said map, and section 69.97 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

No land or premises shall be included in the boundaries of the following towns, to-wit: Abrams, Armstrong, Bagley, C. A. Z. U., Big Chass, Gillett, How, Lena, Little River, Little Suamico, Maple Valley, Morgan, Oconto, Oconto Falls, Penokee, River, Shiocton, Somo, Stiles, Townsend, Underhill and Wheeler, are hereby divided into three (3) classes of use districts as follows, to-wit:

SECTION II

District No. 1—Forestry District

In the forestry district, no building shall be erected or

structurally altered or used except

in conformity with the regulations herein prescribed for the use districts in which such land or premises are located.

No building shall be erected or

structurally altered or used except

in conformity with the regulations

herein prescribed for the use districts in which such building is located.

SECTION II

District No. 2—Recreation District

In the forestry district, no

building, land or premises

will be used except for one or

more of the following specified uses:

1. Production of forest

products

2. Forest industries

3. Public and private

parks, playgrounds, camp

grounds and golf grounds

The boundaries of the aforesaid three (3) use districts are shown upon the official map of Oconto county, attached hereto, being designated as the "Zoning Map" of Oconto County, Oconto County, Wisconsin, dated Sept. 13, 1934, and made a part of this ordinance. All notations, references and other things shown upon said zoning map showing use districts shall be as much a part of this ordinance as if the matter and

established. Any amendment, supplement or change may be proposed by the board of supervisors of the town or of the town board, or town boards, of the town or towns, in which may be situated and lands affected by such amendment or change. Any proposed change shall first be submitted to the Rural Planning Committee for its recommendation. Any and all ordinances which may amend this ordinance, which have been adopted as herein provided, shall be submitted to the town boards governing the territory affected thereby and their approval obtained before the same may be adopted by the county board.

SECTION X

Enforcement of Penalties

The provisions of this ordinance will be enforced by the direction of the county board of supervisors. Any person, firm, company or corporation who violates any of the provisions of this ordinance, refuses to comply with or who resists the enforcement of any of the provisions of this ordinance, shall be fined not less than ten (\$10.00) dollars less than two hundred (\$200.00) dollars, together with costs of action, to be defrayed by the person or corporation, to imprisonment in the county jail for a period of not less than six (6) months, or until such fine and costs be paid. Compliance therewith may be enforced by injunctions, or by any other action the county or the owner or owners of lands within the district affected by the regulation of this ordinance.

SECTION XI

Validity

Should any section, clause or provisions of this ordinance be declared by the courts to be invalid, such section, clause or provisions shall affect the validity of the ordinance in its whole, or any part thereof, other than the part so declared to be invalid.

SECTION XII

Certain terms and words used in this ordinance are defined as follows:

SECTION V

Non-conforming uses

The lawful use of any building, land or premises existing at the time of the passage of this ordinance, although such use does not conform to the provisions hereof, may be continued, but if such non-conforming use is discontinued, any future use of said building, land or premises shall be in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION VI

Forest products

Products obtained from stands of forest trees which have been either naturally or artificially established.

SECTION VII

Forestry products

The cutting and storing of forest products, the operation of portable sawmills and planer, the production of charcoal, etc.

SECTION VIII

Public and private parks, camp grounds and golf grounds

Areas of land with or without buildings designed for recreational uses.

SECTION IX

Recreation camps and resorts

Areas of land improved for the use of temporary facilities used for occupancy during a part of the year only.

SECTION X

Private cottages and lodgings

Buildings designed for temporary occupancy and normally used by the owner together with additional structures to house materials and services.

SECTION XI

Hunting and fishing camps

Buildings used at special seasons of the year as a base for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation.

SECTION XII

Trappers' cabin

A building designed for and occupied as a trap line for operating traps.

SECTION XIII

Boat liveries

Establishments offering the rental of boats and fishing equipment.

SECTION XIV

Changes and amendments

The board of supervisors of Oconto County, Wisconsin, at any time, amend, supplement or change by ordinance the boundaries of districts or regulations herein

SECTION XV

Adopted Sept. 13, 1934.

H. E. MUEHLER,

Chairman Board of Supervisors

Oconto County, Wisconsin.

JOHN M. COOK,

Oconto, Wis.

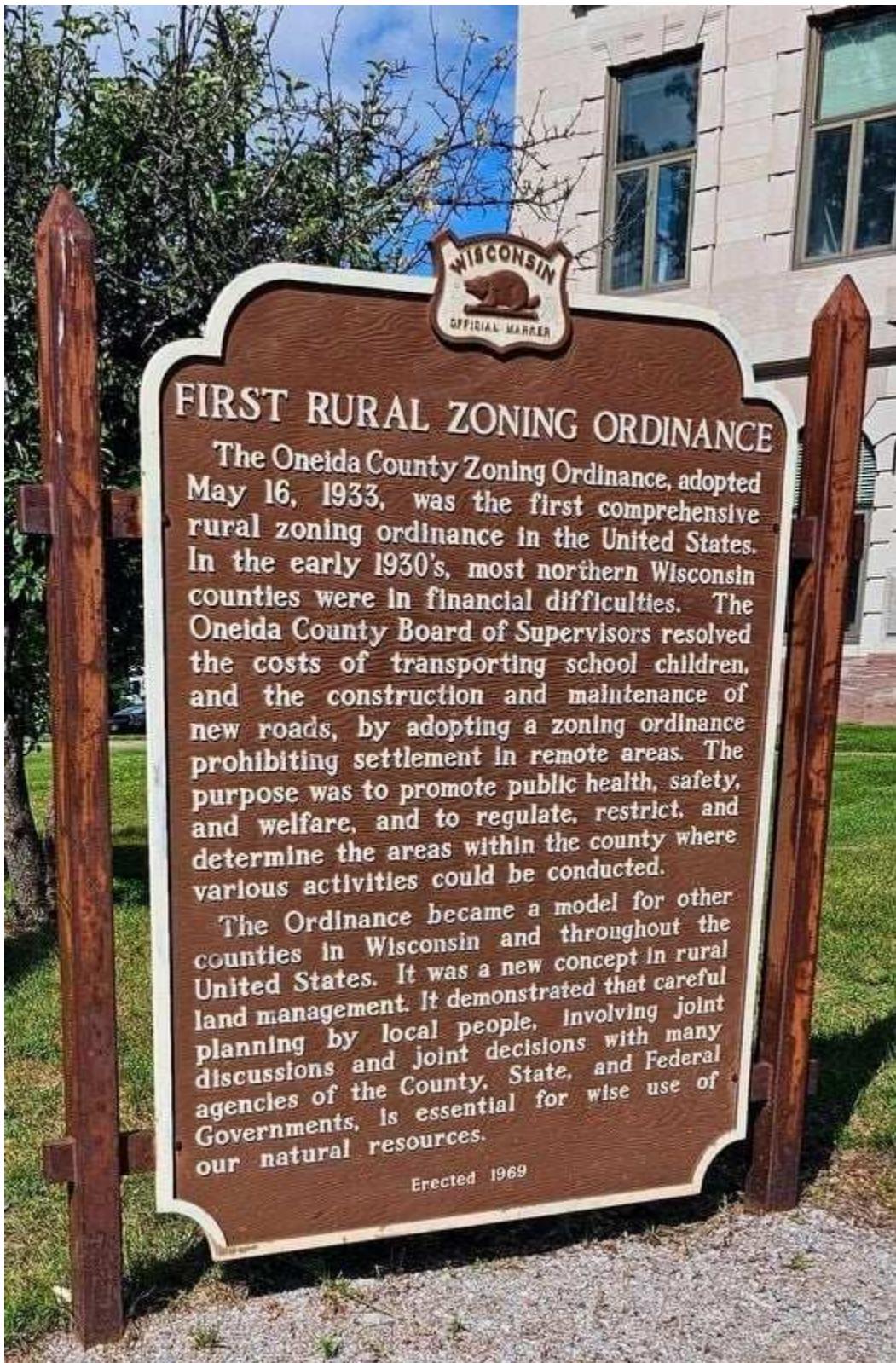
Published October 11, 1934.

Pat Virtues

From: wcca@googlegroups.com on behalf of Karl Jennrich <kjennrich@oneida countywi.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 8, 2025 9:22 AM
To: WCCA@googlegroups.com
Subject: [WCCA Board] Good Monday Morning
Attachments: 20251208091205422.pdf

Good Morning:

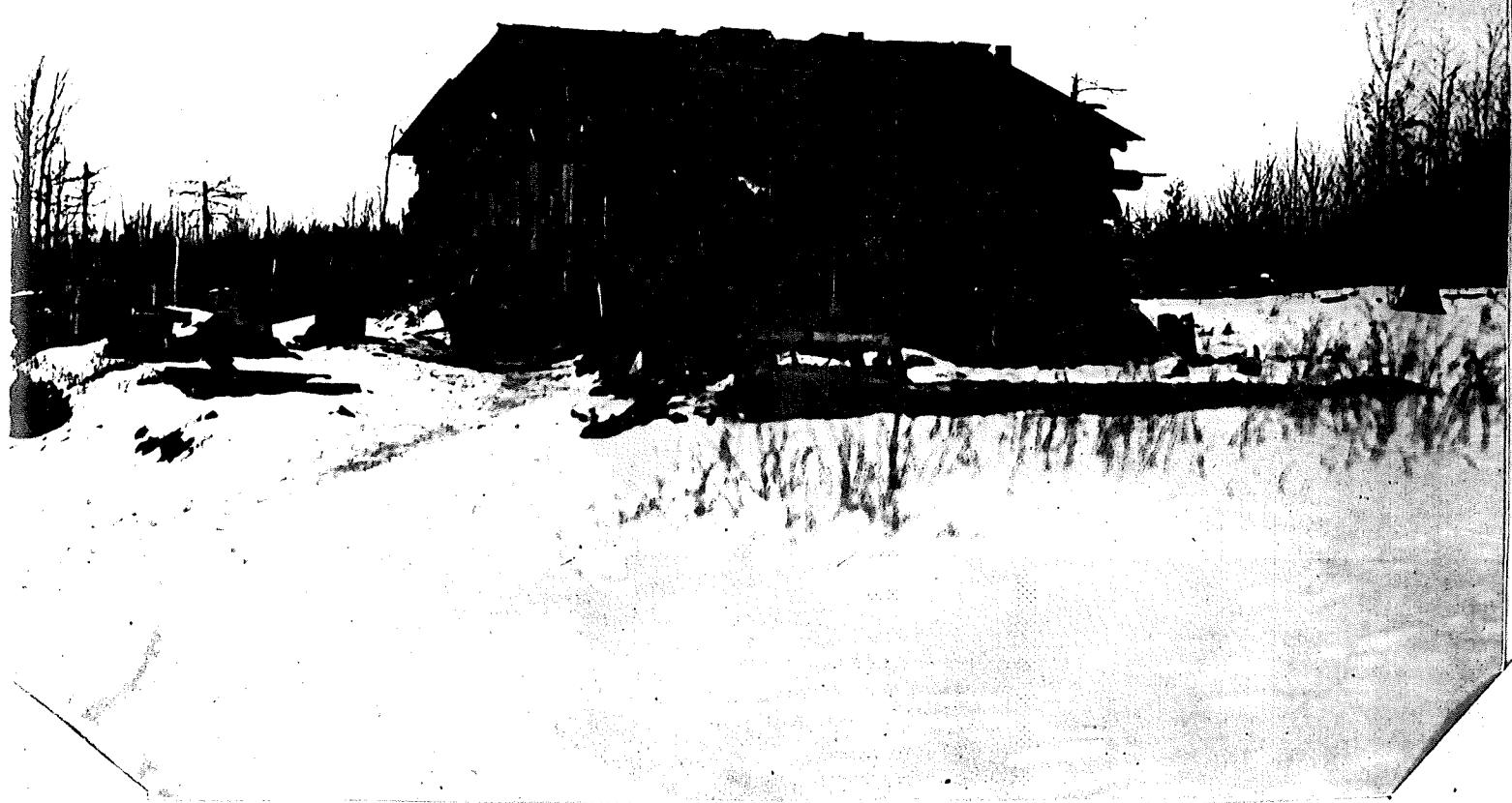
Our county clerk found this gem of a document in her files and decided to send it up to me. There are stories of "The Value and Significance of the Rural Zoning Movement in Wisconsin". Some of your counties are mentioned. If you are not aware ONEida county was the first county in the United State to have a rural zoning ordinance. Does this mean Oneida county has been number ONE since 1933? If you are in the area, I will show you the historical marker in the front of the courthouse. Happy Holidays! Karl



Karl Jennrich
Oneida County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Director
P.O. Box 400
Courthouse
Rhineland, WI 54501
715-369-6176
kjennrich@oneidacountywi.gov

A COLLECTION OF
SOME OF THE MOST INTERESTING
STORIES, INCIDENTS AND STATEMENTS
GIVEN BY
LOCAL OFFICIALS AND RESIDENTS
OF NORTHERN WISCONSIN
ON
THE VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF
THE RURAL ZONING MOVEMENT IN WISCONSIN

ISOLATION



A settler's home in a forest region isolated from neighbors, markets, schools, churches, and the community center. This building was inhabited by a family with four children. The family was relocated to better land in an established community and the land purchased under the Isolated Settler Purchase Program of the Jones Bankhead Farm Tenant Act.

THE RURAL ZONING MOVEMENT

Rural zoning in Wisconsin grew out of stern necessity. The dominating purposes back of the rural zoning movement were to prevent unwise and unnecessary expenditures for public services such as roads, schools and relief, to protect prospective settlers in the settlement of the land and to provide an orderly basis for the best use of the land. Under the Wisconsin law, (section 59.97 of the Wisconsin Statutes 1931) County Boards of Supervisors were authorized to enact rural zoning ordinances. However, the determination of where and on what lands those restrictions were to apply was officially the responsibility of the Town Board of the Town in which the land was located.

Because the rural zoning idea was new, because it was untried (Wisconsin was the first state to zone strictly rural lands under a State Enabling Act) and because "rugged individualism" in its "purest form" is most apt to be found in the "pioneer fringe" it was felt that before any formal county action was taken a special series of educational meetings should be held in every community involved. These informal, educational meetings (more than 200 such meetings were held from 1933 to 1938) provided an opportunity for local residents to discuss the basic principles of rural zoning, its purpose and the procedure to be followed. Without these educational meetings and without the understanding which grew out of them, it is doubtful if the rural zoning movement would have spread as rapidly or as completely as it did throughout northern and central Wisconsin Counties.

The incidents and stories here recorded grew out of these unique and somewhat colorful and eventful local discussions.

Madison, Wisconsin
March 1, 1945

W. A. ROWLANDS

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SAID

In a reply to a series of questions by the Wisconsin Special Legislative Committee on forest fires and delinquent taxes (1931), the Attorney General, in an official opinion stated:

"The county zoning ordinance is undoubtedly in the public welfare. The cut-over areas of northern Wisconsin speak as eloquently against haphazard development as any city condition. The spotting of these lands with remote or abandoned farms, resulting in sparsely settled districts, with insufficient population or value to support roads and schools, or to afford the comforts of living that this day should give to all; the misdirected efforts to farm lands not well suited to agriculture, with resulting personal grief and social loss; the far-reaching economic ill-effects of stripping the state of timber; the fire hazard of cut-over lands and the fire hazard of human habitation in their midst, all cry out for planning, for social direction of individual effort."

"...I believe the judicial tendency is going to be to recognize more and more the great social evil of uncorrelated and unrestrained individual and selfish enterprise, and hence to broaden its views of the power of government to plan the social and economic conditions of the present and the future."

Town of Lynne
Oneida County
Dec. 7, 1934

TRAGEDY IN A LONELY CABIN

Two years ago in the Willow Lake Country, 14 miles north of Tripoli in the Town of Lynne, Oneida County, the elderly wife of a settler, Mrs. Sarah Moss (85 years of age) living in an isolated area in one of the restricted use districts in Oneida County died of pneumonia. She had received no medical aid or attention. Mr. and Mrs. Moss had been receiving relief for more than a year, but they clung to their home in the woods and opposed suggestions of relief officials that they be relocated. Her death occurred during one of our most severe snowstorms when even those families located on main-traveled highways had difficulty in getting to town. Three days later a trapper stopped at the cabin of the old couple and learned of the death of the wife. County officials were informed including Thomas Crawford, Oneida County Relief Director, and Harry J. Williams, County Highway Commissioner. An expedition including trucks and snow plows was immediately organized. Finally, for the last several miles, a toboggan was dragged in by Mark Stockley, Oneida County rehabilitation officer, on snowshoes to transport the body from the cabin for burial later at Abbotsford, Wisconsin.

This incident received widespread publicity in the state press. It served in a dramatic way to illustrate the hazards of isolation--its expense, its danger and its futility.

Town of Athelstane
Marinette County

ZONING AND HEALTH

A few years ago in Marinette County, a husband and wife squatted in an abandoned tar paper shack on tax delinquent, non-agricultural land. Both of them contracted typhoid fever. The husband died and the wife left the community. An attempt was made to persuade local officials to destroy the building, but this was not done. Like many other shacks on abandoned farms, it was not fit for human habitation at any season of the year. Further, local officials were told how impossible it is to adequately clean up any premises following the outbreak of a communicable disease.

In spite of these warnings, the very next season another family of squatters moved in. Soon typhoid fever again broke out, resulting in the death of the father, the mother and one child. The immediate cost to the county in this case was \$600.00, but this amount represents only the financial loss to the taxpayers. It gives no indication of the extent and severity of human suffering nor the social loss associated with families living in dwellings without floors, without beds and neither the facilities nor the knowledge to maintain a normal standard of living, of sanitation, or even of morality.

Joe Furry

Joe Furry, who has been a bombardier in the South Pacific for six years received a medical discharge on account of malignant malaria, was advised by his doctor to seek a northern climate to help him overcome his sickness. He was born and raised in Louisiana. His only farm experience was that of a cotton planter.

Not knowing where to go, he took a map of Wisconsin, shut his eyes and with a pin marked a spot on the map. When he looked, he found the town of Ogema in Price County was the nearest place. He then went to a real estate agency to find out if there were any farms for sale in Wisconsin and when given a sales catalogue, and opening it up the first name he saw was Ogema. As flyers go on "hunches" he figured this was the place for him to go.

Arriving, a total stranger, in Ogema in December, 1944, he found a real estate man and was sold a 40 acre farm for \$3000. Joe Furry had \$1000 in cash and was given a land contract for one year to pay the balance. He expected to refinance this through the G.I. Bill and be set up with livestock, machinery and household goods as he had no personal property.

It is very doubtful that a credit agency would give him the money even with the government guarantee and the FSA certifying committee would not certify the loan as it is not a profitable farm unit. The veteran has not had sufficient farm experience to make a living on this place. Joe Furry will no doubt lose his \$1000.

Anxious to get further farm experience he is now working on a farm in Price County and we hope he will continue to be employed here for at least one year. This farm experience should prove of some value to him because the farmer for whom he is working is considered a good farmer.

Contributed by
The Farm Security Administration

Mr. Saari - Town of Lynne
1933 -- Oneida County

ZONING CAME TOO LATE

At the initial educational meeting held in the Town of Lynne, Oneida County when the purpose of rural zoning and how it would serve the local taxpayers had been explained by Messrs. Sorden and Rowlands of the Agricultural Extension Service, Mr. Saari, the town chairman said: "Your zoning program is O.K. except for one thing. It's 25 years too late. A few years ago a man and his family came here from the southern part of Wisconsin. He bought a "forty" of land north of Highway No. 8 several miles from any neighbors and without any road leading to it. He asked the town board to build him a road. We of the town board refused. The next year, when there were two new members on our town board, a petition was circulated for a road and was presented to our board. The new members voted to build the road. It cost \$1200.00 to build that road. This man used the road just once - to move out of the town. There the road lies, and we spent \$1200.00 of our taxpayers' money for no good purpose. Now we are going to zone it. We should have done so long ago."

Clark County

A SHREWD DEAL - IT COST THE COUNTY PLENTY

Prior to the development of a rural zoning ordinance in Clark County, there were many financial difficulties with which the county was continually confronted. As an illustration the following story is told:

On February 2, 1933, Mr. Ferguson bought a piece of tax delinquent land (40 acres) for \$23.97 from the county (which according to Fradette is cheaper than stealing it from the Indians). He immediately demanded a road to his property. The road would cost in excess of \$1600.00. The county finally, after much discussion, bought out this settler. But to do so, they had to pay \$700 for this land - which originally cost the purchaser \$23.97 - an increase of \$676.03. He made no improvements on the land, but did cut and remove every foot of merchantable timber remaining on the land. Had the zoning ordinance been in force when this man bought his land, the necessity of purchasing his land to prevent the building of a road would have been eliminated.

As told by Jim Fradette
Co. Treasurer, Clark Co.

Town of Presque Isle
Vilas County, 1934

"WE SHOULD HAVE HAD ZONING LONG AGO"

At the educational zoning meeting held in the Town of Presque Isle, Vilas County, the following incident was related by a member of the town board.

"Several years ago a settler bought three government lots on the north and west side of our lake. (Presque Isle Lake) He cleared the land down to the water's edge, built a shack and barn, and let his cows roam around this whole area. On all other sides of this lake there are summer homes, resorts, hotels, clubs and camps. The owners of these properties have preserved the timber on the water's edge. Individually they pay much more money into the town and county in the form of taxes than this small settler, and they are vitally interested in preserving their recreational assets. We'd have been money ahead if we had bought the best farm in the county and traded it to this settler for these three government lots before their recreational value was destroyed. Today we'd have several valuable summer homes paying taxes regularly where this farm is now located, and the settler would have had better agricultural land a mile or two back from the lake. We should have had a zoning ordinance here in this county a long time ago before this damage was done. Now we are locking the door after the horse is stolen."

Dexter Township
Wood County

LOCAL SCHOOL A FAMILY AFFAIR --- PUBLIC PAYS

When John Ruegames came to his farm in Dexter Township on October 17, 1930, he learned that a certain John Hart and wife constituted the majority of the local school board. They had hired one Grace Nicholas to teach the two pupils in attendance at the school. John Hart and wife were the parents of these two children. A third school director and Ruegames called on the county superintendent of schools, Mr. Sory, to learn how much it cost to teach these two children. They found that the total bill was \$1380.00 per year.

The school report showed that in addition to the expense of the teacher, this family collected the balance of the fund for alleged services to the district. The school director demanded they haul the children to school themselves. The man and wife, majority of the board, demanded \$80.00 a month to haul their own children to school. At a school board meeting bids were opened for a school bus contract. The lowest bidder did not get the contract. It went, instead, to a personal friend of the Harts.

Wise Land Company
Sawyer County

LAND COMPANIES AGREE TO PRINCIPLES OF ZONING

At the time the preliminary zoning meetings in Sawyer County were held, S. Wise of the Wise Land Company said:

"We favor zoning in Sawyer County. When a settler comes to us to buy land, we first find out what kind of land he wants, and then take him out and show it to him. Often we take him to a growing community, where there is good land, a school, a church and a market center, and where the land is located on a good road. The settler looks the land over and often agrees that it is good land, free from stone, that it lays well and can be cleared without too much expense. When told the price of it, he says, 'Haven't you got some cheaper land?' We say, 'Yes, we have.' Then he asks to see the cheaper land. We take him to see it, but there is no road to it, and it is at a distance from the market center, from school, and from any neighbors. The price is less than half the other land which he looked at. Usually he says, 'I'll take this land.'

"We say, 'Of course you know there's no road,' to which he says, 'Well, I'll take my chance on getting the town board to build me a road.'

"Now if we had a zoning ordinance in effect in Sawyer County we'd show the settlers land like that first described. If he asked if we had cheaper land, we'd say, 'Yes, but the county has zoned it, and it will probably stay zoned until all good farm land in the established agricultural communities is taken up. You can't farm it today.'"

Oneida County Board Resolution - Authorizing a Settler Relocation Program

Resolution No. 4
Offered by Supervisor Gale Huber

Resolve by the Board of Supervisors of Oneida County, Wisconsin, that, whereas, Oneida County has now in effect a county zoning ordinance, which ordinance regulates, restricts, and determines areas within which agriculture, forestry and recreation may be conducted and

Whereas, there are within the restricted use district prescribed by such ordinance certain families designated as "continuing non-conforming users" known and presumed to be agreeable to exchanging their properties for properties in unrestricted land use areas, more adapted to farming and settlement with consequent financial savings to the local government for public services now required and

Whereas, state relief agencies, in cooperation with Oneida County, are agreeable to establish work relief projects wherein recipients of relief may be gainfully employed on public work and

Whereas, it is believed that a work relief project can be established in Oneida County which will put Oneida County in possession of properties suitable to affect the desired land exchanges, now therefore,

Be it resolved by the Oneida County Board of Supervisors, that the rehabilitation committee is hereby directed to proceed in developing the attached plan of relocation conferring with the office of County Relief Director to the end that one or more work relief projects as outlined in the attached plan be inaugurated and completed, and recommend to the County Board for resettlement those families within restricted land use districts in exchange for their land, which exchanges are in the interest of greater public economy.

Be it resolved that said rehabilitation committee is hereby specifically authorized and directed working through the office of the County Clerk by virtue of a tax deed either by obtaining a quit claim deed from the former owners including the purchase of unredeemed tax certificates or by suit for court deed pursuant to (Section 75.39) Wisconsin Statutes when such lands are deemed suitable for development and subsequent settler exchange and relocation and to engage the services of the county surveyor to establish the boundaries of such lands selected for development and all expenses incurred in pursuance hereof are hereby authorized subject to audit and approval of this board, but the expense of clearing title to land acquired and establishing boundaries for any one case of settler relocation shall not exceed \$100.

Offered and passage moved by Supervisor Gale W. Huber.

Moved by Supervisor Huber, seconded by Schwartz that the resolution be adopted as read. Motion carried. All members present voting "aye".

Dated this 17th day of August, 1934.
Rhinelander, Wisconsin

HOME BUILDING

In the summer of 1934 a unique and dramatic demonstration of farm and home building was carried out in the Town of Cassian, Oneida County.

Eighty acres of land was selected in the Town of Cassian one and a half miles from a market town and in an established farming community. The land was purchased by the Wisconsin Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, and the entire project sponsored by the Rural Rehabilitation Division of U.S.D.A. In a period of less than 3 weeks time 10 acres of land was cleared and plowed and another 13 acres brushed and a one-acre garden area cleared and fenced. A log house was built, complete with well and a root cellar in the basement. A log barn and poultry house was also built. A quantity of split stumps and popple poles was piled near the kitchen for fuel purposes.

In the development of this farm and home, CWA labor was used entirely. The cedar logs used in construction and tractor and plow used in clearing and breaking were furnished by the Wisconsin Conservation Department.

This demonstration was planned to show in a very practical way the need for better land and better locations in established farming communities for settlers. It was also planned to demonstrate how idle land, idle men and local resources - logs, poles, lumber, stone and gravel could be utilized in economical home and farm construction programs.

This 80 acre farm was formally turned over to Rex Sanns, an isolated settler living in the Town of Cassian, in trade for his land which was in the restricted use district under the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance.

Participating in the dedication program in September, 1934, were K. L. Hatch Director of Agricultural Extension; Dr. Gale W. Huber, Chairman of Oneida County Board; Tom Meredith, Chairman of Town of Cassian; Mark Stockley, County Relief Director; Arlie Mucks, State Director of Rural Rehabilitation of U.S.D.A.; F. C. Wilson of the Wisconsin Conservation Department; Dr. Frisbee of the Wisconsin State Board of Health; F. B. Trenk, Wisconsin College of Agriculture, and many other officials from the County, the State and the Federal Governments.

W. A. Rowlands planned and carried out this farm and home building program with the help of S. A. Witzel and S. A. Samuelson, Architectural and Engineering Specialists.



Dr. Gale W. Huber, Chairman Oneida County Board of Supervisors in September, 1934, speaking at dedication of the farm and home built for an isolated settler in Town of Cassian, Oneida County.



Reading from left to right: Oneida County Agent Harvey Becker, Dr. Gale W. Huber, Chairman of Oneida County Board, Mark Stockley, Rural Resettlement Supervisor and Tom Meredith, Chairman Town of Cassian at dedication ceremony.

Marinette County

RELOCATION VOLUNTARY OR MANDATORY?

Following the relocation of one family in the Town of Goodman, Marinette County, there was a great deal of comment locally on the general principle of relocating isolated settlers, some of it considerably at variance with the facts. One day as F. G. Wilson and C. B. Drewry were driving in northwest Marinette County a settler, recognizing them, hailed them and stopped to talk. He said, "What's all this I heard about picking a fellow up by the slack of the pants and moving him from one place to another in the county."

Wilson and Drewry explained that this relocation case was voluntary on the part of the settler -- that he now has a much better farm than he had before -- he is close to the village and school facilities -- and he is on a good road where the school bus and mail route go by every day. He has neighbors and can exchange work, and in addition the county saves money. They do not have to maintain an isolated road. They don't have to pay \$450 annually for board for the children of this family in the village in winter and in addition a serious fire hazard has been eliminated. After listening to this explanation, the settler with a twinkle in his eye summed up his feelings on this matter by this statement, "Keep me in mind when you've got any more money to buy out isolated settlers. Remember I'm not married to this damn patch of sand I've got."

Town of Piehl
Oneida County

FRED PIEHL LANDOWNER AND FRED PIEHL TAXPAYER

In the early 1930's Fred Piehl sold forty acres of land to a settler from southern Wisconsin. This land was located in the north-east corner of Section 1, Township 37, North of Range 11 East. No one lived in this region. In fact there was no human habitation nor roads in all of the east half of the township consisting of 18 sections of land. No school facilities existed either. The sale for 40 acres was \$350.

Fred Piehl sat down to figure. Sold 40 acres for \$350. The new settler would demand a road three miles to build - 1 mile of which would be expensive, perhaps \$3000 for the road, and snow plowing in winter would be costly also. The settler has four children of school age - he would want a school. This would cost plenty to build. If it was not built, the school board would have to provide parent transportation or board for the children in the village near the school in the winter.

After listing all costs to the community for demands made by this settler, Fred figured his share of the costs. Since he owned most of the land in the Town of Piehl and paid 80% of the taxes, his share of taxes in the first year the new settler was in the community would amount to much more than he would make on the sale of land. He gave the settler \$25 for his bargain and got the land back. It is now in a county forest unit, and the land now owned by the county is entered under the Wisconsin Forest Crop Law.

RELOCATION -- AN INVESTMENT THAT PAYS DIVIDENDS

We viewed one of these farm relocation propositions down near Glidden yesterday. A farmer who had located in the forest, and in the restricted district under the Ashland County Zoning Ordinance, six miles from nowhere, but who had cleared forty acres and had a fair set of farm buildings, was moved to a farm on a highway with just as good soil, just as many acres, and just as good buildings and a school nearby for his children. The farmer wins, he is better located in every way. The town and county win, because of the saving of expense in snow removal, road upkeep and school transportation for the farmer's children.

The original farm, now county-owned, becomes a part of the county forest, and under the zoning law cannot be used for agricultural purposes any more. Under this law, none of the restricted land, whether county-owned or not, can be used for farming. When farms are already established, the farmer can decide whether to play ball with the county and be relocated on a farm where roads and schools are already established and give up his old farm -- or stick it out. It cost the county \$1300.00 to move this farmer from the place we viewed. The county will save more than that in three years by having eliminated the expense of serving that particular isolated farm with roads, snow removal and school facilities.

EDITORIAL -- ASHLAND DAILY PRESS
October 1, 1939
By John C. Chapple

Raymond Bushey

Raymond Bushey was an electrician and a high grade worker in Stevens Point. During the early "Thirties" he had no work and in an attempt to "beat the depression" he moved to Swampsager Lake, close to the outlet of Swampsager Creek in western Oneida County. Here he attempted to raise some garden crops and to rent some boats to tourists for fishing. He had a wife and two boys of grade and high school age. His wife was pleasant and well educated. The youngsters were bright and alert.

They built a log cabin and a small barn for a horse and a cow. However, their location was 18 miles west of Hazelhurst on an almost impassable logging road. They were 12 to 14 miles north of Tripoli and about 4 miles from a road which closed during the heavy snow season. It was 14 miles to an open road and a market and 19 miles to the school, at Hazelhurst. Part of the year they boarded the children at Hazelhurst and part of the time they were unable to attend school. Much of the time the family had no income and therefore were on relief. On several occasions the town of Minocqua brought in supplies on snowshoes.

In 1936 the Federal Government, as a part of the isolated settler purchase program, bought their farm and they moved several months before payment was made for their land. Mr. Bushey immediately got a job constructing an R.F.A. line. The children were put in school and the wife again became acquainted with civilization.

Sam Ballas
Langlade County

THE STORY OF SAM BALLAS

Sam Ballas is a Greek farmer living up in Langlade County who had always had a hankering to get himself a farm. And so, a Chicago real estate agent sold Sam a "very fine piece of farm land" out to the west of Antigo. This land is now in the restricted district under the zoning ordinance.

One bitterly cold morning in 1939 I met Sam Ballas. His feet were wrapped in burlap sacks to keep them warm. He invited me into the house, just a small shack. In one corner of the room there was a bunk constructed of rough lumber, and in it Mrs. Ballas, who was very ill, was covered with dirty looking blankets, trying to keep warm.

Sam had done everything in his power to make himself a living, but the soil just wouldn't support him. It was too swampy and wet. He said that a man couldn't lead a horse through any of his fields without getting mired.

Sam had sunk his life's savings of \$5,000 into his farm. He had to ask for relief to keep his wife and four small boys. This hurt Sam's pride, he became bitter, irritable and grouchy. His boys had to be transported to a school in Lincoln County, because there were no schools in the neighborhood.

We bought Sam Ballas' farm and paid him cash for it. He bought 80 acres of good productive land in a high state of fertility on the Antigo flats. He has a nicely furnished brick house equipped with a furnace and electric lights, a good barn and 18 head of livestock. Sam is all smiles now.

Contributed by E. J. Peterson
Soil Conservation Service

Taylor Rapids Community
Marinette County

THE TAYLOR RAPIDS COMMUNITY

Twenty years ago, when the boom was on to make an agricultural empire out of Wisconsin's cutover lands, Taylor Rapids, like scores of other settlements, was self-sustaining. Scores of hard-working families, lured by the promise of rich land at a bargain, had put their life savings into the clearings, many of them located at the end of dim forest trails.

But fate had stacked the cards against them. A crop or two, and the shallow soil faked out. Savings -- what little they still had -- were quickly dissipated. Taxes piled up. The future was black with despair. It was a case of move, starve or go on relief. Realizing they were licked, many pulled staked, others hung on in poverty and isolation.

Taylor Rapids community declined in population to seven families, six on relief, with no outlook for self-sustenance. Marinette County, which had to foot the bills, hired an auditor to check the income and outgo. He found that Taylor Rapids had paid \$276 in county, state and school taxes in six years. But it had required for its support for the same period:

For schools	\$9,154
For roads	7,300
For relief	<u>5,148</u>
Total	\$21,602

The deficit was \$21,326. County officials went into a huddle.

"Let's buy 'em out and turn the site back to forest," suggested one. The idea was approved and a deal was struck. The seven settlers were bought out for \$7500 -- the money coming out of savings in road, school and relief funds -- and the Taylor Rapids community became a memory.

What happened to Taylor Rapids is part and parcel of Wisconsin's ingenious plan to save money; to improve the health, education, and opportunities of its rural population; and to restore its natural resources by acquiring wilderness settlements and submarginal cutover farms on a vast scale. It is done mostly by tax delinquencies and abandonment, partly by purchase and trade, and turning the land back to nature -- with an intelligent eye to large timber tracts, game refuges, summer resort regions, and many a sportsman's paradise years ahead.

Taken from article "Wisconsin Goes Wild."
by Wm. F. McDermott in November, 1940 issue
of THE ROTARIAN

Contributed by C. B. Drewry

Town of Goodman
Marinette County

THE GOODMAN RELOCATION CASE

In northeastern Wisconsin, a family homesteaded an isolated "forty", seven miles from a village and two and one-half miles beyond any existing road. It was also located inside an area of several thousand acres of timber on which local government depended for revenue, local industry for raw materials, and local people for employment. This settler demanded the extension of a road two and one-half miles to his farm, and wanted transportation for his children to school at public expense.

The road would cost several thousand dollars to build. It would cost \$450.00 per year to board the children in the village. The school district and the town board felt that such demands were unreasonable, and further, unnecessary. Finally, as an alternative they secured eighty acres of land close to the village and on a highway on which a school bus and a mail route operated. Local officials induced the settler to trade his isolated "forty" for this well-located "eighty", and, in addition, assisted him in moving and in preliminary equipment.

This statesmanlike action on the part of the local government improved matters for everyone concerned. The town board has avoided an unnecessary expense for roads. The school district has been saved an unnecessary school transportation expense. A serious forest fire hazard has been eliminated. Most important of all, the family enjoys new social and economic advantages not possible in its old location. Several years have passed since this relocation took place. Time has proved the wisdom of the move. The old homestead and the surrounding timber land have been placed in a restricted use district under the zoning ordinance, giving assurance to the taxpayers that never again will this land be a burden to them.

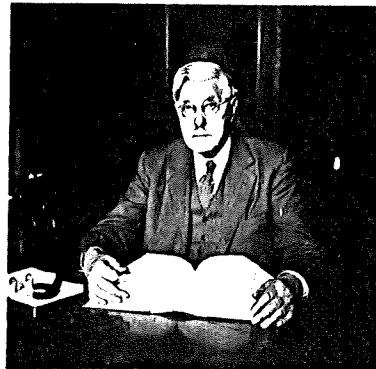
"THE LOVE OF THE OLD HOMESTEAD"

In the town of Athlestane in Marinette County, Ira White, a Kentuckian, and his family, wife and several children lived on a 120 acres in an isolated community. This land was finally purchased, in about 1938, only, however, after much discussion and deliberation on the part of Mr. White and his wife.

The Resettlement Administration's isolated settlers purchase project paid the Whites \$950 for the 120 acres. Ira White moved with the children, furniture and effects to a new location he had purchased (160 acres) in the town of Amberg. His wife refused to leave the old place. She stayed a total of five days in the cabin by herself. During this period she was without a bed, without a stove, without food or, in fact, without anything whatever in the cabin. After two days the neighbors came and left her some food. At the end of five days she finally decided to move to her family.

In this new location Ira White has much improved his financial status. He has cleared 40 acres, has bought an additional forty, and has had many profitable jobs cutting pulp around his farm. His family is now grown, and he has two boys in the service. The re-location from this isolated farm to a new location in the town of Amberg has meant much to him and his family.

Contributed by C. B. Drewry



E. C. Hart, Municipal Judge, Bayfield County, Washburn, Wisconsin, was the first judge in Wisconsin to have a case of rural zoning violation brought to his court. A family did use their premises (in a forestry zone) contrary to the provisions of the Bayfield County zoning ordinance.

On June 26, 1940 Judge Hart found the defendants, Roy M. Johannes and Rose Johannes guilty of the offence alleged in the complaint. The court "adjudged that the defendants do pay a fine of \$20.00 each defendant and the costs of this action, said costs taxed at \$3.20; in all the sum of \$43.20. In default of the payment of said fine and costs it is ordered that the defendants be committed to the common jail of said county for a period of twenty (20) days."

SAWYER COUNTY "RELOCATION MANDATORY"

Jess Potter purchased a wild "eighty" from John Hebbring under a land contract for \$500 or thereabouts in 1945. This land was located in Section 34, Town 38 North Range, 4 West, Town of Winter in the restricted use district under the Sawyer County Zoning Ordinance where the establishment of farms was expressly prohibited. There were the remains of an old logging camp on the property. The land had been heavily burned but had never been farmed.

A barn was erected in a cut made by the railroad company when laying the logging track. Here Mr. Potter kept a herd of eight to ten head of livestock and two horses.

He had a family of eight children. They lived from the income of the cows and what little logging and pulping Mr. Potter was able to do.

In the spring of 1946 action was started to have him moved out of the zoned area. He was given 90 days to find a new location. He was unable to find a place and his time was extended for another 60 days. Mr. Potter was trying very hard but still failed. He was given another 30 days without a fine, but at the end of this period a fine would be assessed. He located a new place and moved about 10 days before the extended time was up. Since he failed to make any payment on the land contract, the property remained in the hands of Mr. Hebbring.

The County then made an appraisal of this property and offered Mr. Hebbring \$320. He accepted the offer. It is now entered under Forest Crop Law.

Burt Blackburn

Burt Blackburn, with his wife and two teen age boys moved from Indiana to a "forty" in the town of Lake Tomahawk fifteen miles northwest of Rhinelander in Oneida County. The man who sold him the land said, "Clover for cattle grew wild and blackberries for home use could be picked from the windows of their home". Crude wooden buildings were on the place when it was purchased in the late 20's. This "forty" was one of the roughest in that area. It was hilly, stony and part swamp. As a result, nothing was cleared except a very small garden. Their "farm" was located two miles from a plowed road. The family was eight miles from the school at Lake Tomahawk.

The Blackburns were a high-grade family. Mr. Blackburn was a reliable worker. Mrs. Blackburn was formerly a school teacher in Indiana. The children were alert and intelligent.

In the winter 1933-34, there was a proposed isolated settler relocation project to be financed jointly by the State of Wisconsin and the Federal Government. The governor of the State appointed Col. Holden of the Soldiers' Home at Waupaca to investigate its possibilities. One very cold winter morning Col. Holden arrived at my office and asked to see an isolated settler. I took him to the Blackburn home. Upon arrival, we found the entire family at home, as the boys were ill with colds and could not go to school. Before we could get in the well kept home, Mrs. Blackburn had to move music racks and two musical instruments. She said the boys had been practicing for the school band as they were unable to go to school that day.

We explained to them that we had no definite proposal to offer them but were investigating situations.

As we were ready to leave, Mrs. Blackburn broke down crying. A tense few moments passed while she composed herself and then said, "Mr. Sorden, I have not seen another woman for four months. The very thought of the idea of moving out of this place makes me so happy I just had to cry. Thank God, that somebody is trying to do something about the plight of the isolated settlers. Please forgive me."

Col. Holden, a veteran of World War I, also wiped a tear from his eye as we left the house and no word was spoken until we had driven almost to town.

In 1937, under the Federal isolated settler program, the Blackburn's place was purchased. The family moved to Rhinelander, where Mr. Blackburn has been permanently employed. The children have good schools, and Mrs. Blackburn has again the advantages offered by community life.

Leo Davis
Burnett County

THE STORY OF LEO DAVIS

The Soil Conservation Service bought a farm owned by a man named Leo Davis in Burnett County. I'd like to tell you the story of Mr. Davis.

For many years Mr. Davis owned a barber shop in St. Paul and worked hard and saved his money, so that eventually he had bought two houses in St. Paul.

There was a Minneapolis man (a bootlegger in the old prohibition days) who owned 220 acres of very poor land right on the banks of the St. Croix River in Burnett County (where it would be convenient for him to leave the state if he had to), but did have a very fine set of buildings on the land--built from the profits of his liquor business--not from what he had earned off the land.

Davis had dreamed of a country estate and a prosperous and healthy life in the country. Unfortunately these two men met and the result was a trade of Davis' two good homes in the city for the bootlegger's ranch.

When I met Mr. Davis, he was in the "doldrums". He had sunk every dollar he owned into a "white elephant". He was badly isolated from his neighbors, and his children had over 4 miles to go to school. The township had to maintain a road for several miles into his farm and clear the snow for him in the winter.

He probably had \$10,000 invested in the place. We bought him out for \$3200, of which most of the valuation was in buildings.

Contributed by E. J. Peterson
Soil Conservation Service

THE KUBE SCHOOL DISTRICT
OF MARINETTE COUNTY

The Kube School in the Town of Athelstane in Marinette County had, in 1928, only three pupils, all of them of one family. In addition, the daughter was school teacher, the father was school clerk and the mother school treasurer. The cost per pupil was \$333.46. This school district had an assessed valuation of \$34,010.00 and under the old school law, received \$103.30 state aid. Under the new school equalization law it will receive \$1100.00 state aid or about eleven times as much as the school district itself raises in taxes.

From the survey material obtained in preparation of circular "Making the Most of Marinette County Land" March, 1929

3

Town of Dunbar
Marinette County

THE PETERSONS OF DUNBAR

The Petersons were comfortably well to do in Chicago. They innocently bought 120 acres in Dunbar for \$3,000, thinking it would be a nice place to retire to. They built a house for \$2,000. Then came 1929 - bank losses - sickness and abandonment of neighboring farms and county ownership of land through reversion of taxes. Soon they were destitute and more than three miles from their nearest neighbors.

The county bought their land for \$700. With part of this sum, the couple bought three acres in drowsy Dunbar, moved their \$2,000 house to it board by board and nail by nail. Mrs. Peterson now takes in hunters and fishermen and a few tourists during the season and they got along.

Contributed by C. B. Drewry

Burnett County

AN EXPENSIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT ELIMINATED

Several years ago in the Town of Blaine, Burnett County, a school was operating with only two pupils in the district. These two students were from one family and there were only two families in the district, Jones and Zach. Three of the four adults in the district were members of the school board. The families lived in an isolated part of the Burnett County forest. The school teacher boarded with one of the families. The school was a brick building and was kept in excellent shape by the school board members who apparently made something of an income by keeping the buildings repaired. Several attempts were made to purchase the two farms in the district so the school could be closed. Mr. Jones had a bad heart and wanted to live in town close to a doctor. The Zach family might have sold if the county had a farm with buildings to trade with them. Both of the families knew that if either of them moved the school would have to be closed for want of a third member on the school board. They agreed between themselves not to act separately. However, in the fall of 1937, with winter coming on and Mr. Jones' heart condition being no better we were able to buy, for Burnett County Mr. Jones' farm using forest crop money. The Zachs held out for several months, but finally agreed to sell out when a better farm close to the village of Webster was found for them. The brick school house was then sold and removed.

The closing of this school and the relocation of the two families made a real financial saving to the township and Burnett County. It is no longer necessary to snow plow practically the whole township.

Both relocated families are well satisfied with their new locations.

ISOLATED SETTLERS AND SCHOOL COSTS

From the Files of the Isolated Settler Purchase Program

the Following - 1934 - Records were Obtained

CRANDON AREA

Example 1. The Perry family lives more than 7 miles from the Elvoy School in the Town of Nelma, Forest County. Transporting those children to school has cost \$370.00 per year and snowplowing about \$250. The Perry property was purchased for \$400.00.

Example 2. The J. F. Deering family in the town of Popple River in Forest County received \$350.00 in 1934 for transporting their children to school.

This same family and one neighbor cost the town of Popple River \$5000 for building one and one-half miles of road. Nearly half a mile yet needs to be built to complete the road to the farm. These two farms were purchased and the families relocated on good farms in established communities.

Example 3. Mrs. Harriet Jones, with four children of school age, lives in an abandoned logging camp east of the Village of Newald, Forest County, where the closest school is located. Because it is impossible to transport these children, school is held in their home with Mrs. Jones as the teacher. The only road she has to the village is a private one not open to public thoroughfare. Food and other provisions for the family are packed in during the winter by Mrs. Jones and the oldest boy on snowshoes. The children will soon be ready for high school and it will be necessary for board and room to be paid by the town if they are to secure this education. The county superintendent visits this family regularly for supervision and mails out the required examination questions to the mother. Mrs. Jones is a graduate nurse.

DRUMMOND AREA

Example 4. The McNeil School in the Town of Barnes, Bayfield County, cost \$900.00 to operate in the school year of 1933-34. This school is attended by six children, all from the McNeil family. A saving of about \$900.00 a year was made when the family was relocated.

Example 5. The Hancock School in the Town of Barnes was operated at a cost of \$796.25 for the four children of the Hancock family. The school house provided by the district is the Moore School, two and a half miles from the Hancock farm. However, the old Barnes church was used as a school because it adjoins the Hancock farm and it is thought by the district that the transportation and tuition to the Vaulker school in Douglas County, two and a half miles from the Hancock home, would cost nearly as much as operating the present school. Furthermore, the Douglas County school has such a large attendance that they do not wish more scholars.

Example 6. Within the county forest unit, No. 5, Town of Barnes, the Harvey and Wilbur Smith families live. In the school year of 1932-33 the two children of Harvey Smith attended the school of Gordon, District No. 2, in Douglas County at a cost of \$499.14; \$132.14 was tuition and \$360.00 was transportation paid to Harvey Smith. Mr. Smith felt, however, that this was not enough money because the roads were not snow-plowed and consequently in 1933-34 his two children were educated at home. They were furnished books, studied at home and the final examination given by the county superintendent. Wilbur Smith, a brother, has two children who are of school age, and they wish to build a school for these two families. It was voted to build the school, but no money was appropriated for the purpose. Because of the isolated settler purchase program and the rural zoning program there will be no need for school facilities and the school will never need to be built here.

Example 7. School District No. 2 in the Town of Delta spent \$1,096.16 to operate one school in 1933. This school had six pupils, two from the Leonard Forsyth family and four from the Enoch Wick family. Enoch Wick received \$285.75 for relief. For his four children it cost the school district \$730.26 or a total of \$1,116 spent by the governmental agencies to keep this family in school and on relief. These two families were relocated by the purchase program and the school then closed.

LAKWOOD AREA

Example 8. The Schwab School in the Town of Riverview has seven children from the Frank Grindle and Ernest Davis families. These families were relocated, and the school closed. The above two schools in Riverview cost \$2,672.19 to operate in 1933.

Example 9. The five children of the Guy Perkie family cost \$855.00 to transport to the Markton School in Langlade County.

Example 10. The Statler School in the Town of Doty is maintained for nine children from the three families of Zitaka, Wilson and Prosser at a cost in 1933 of \$1,932.84.

TOWNSHIPS WORK WELL WITH COUNTY BOARD TO PROMOTE BEST LAND USE

The double townships of Frog Creek (42 north range, 10 west) and (42-11) have done much to aid Washburn County's Land and Forest Program. One of the finest examples of cooperative purchases made was from Larry McMullen who owned 240 acres in Section 26-42-10.

In 1943 Larry McMullen had the only operating farm in the eastern half of Frog Creek. The only accessible way into his place was through Sawyer County, three miles northeast before you got to the town road in Washburn County which led to McMullen's place. This would mean a ten mile trip for Washburn County highway equipment to work on a half mile of Washburn County town road. This situation raised a problem of town expense for road repair, maintenance and snow plowing. The McMullen farm was a good farm, a lot of cleared land and good buildings. In April 1944 the county purchased this 240 acres from Mr. McMullen for \$3600. The purchase was made from county forest funds. The Township agreed to pay \$1000 of the purchase price at the rate of \$150 per year.

Mr. McMullen then bought a farm in Sawyer County several miles east of the old one which he had sold to the county. During the war years when production was needed, the county rented this land to Mr. McMullen for \$160 in 1944, \$160 in 1945, \$100 in 1946, and sold the hay stumpage each year since then. Further, the county sold part of the buildings and other items such as fence, well pump, etc. for about \$500. These sales and the cooperation of the town with the county made this purchase easy for both Town and County Governments.

Washburn County Forestry Committee intends to plant the open fields to trees in the near future. This land has been in forest crop for several years now, but because it is so isolated and inaccessible, we have not planted any of it as yet.

Adjoining the McMullen farm there was also a 40 acre tract that some residents claimed was an old operating farm. These local citizens further claimed the county committee could not enforce the zoning restriction because the land had a "Non-Conforming Use" status. The town board of the Town of Frog Creek stepped in and purchased the 40 acres involved, then sold this 40 acres to Washburn County for \$40. This purchase wiped out the last of the established non-conforming uses in this one township of Frog Creek 42-10, and as far as I know everyone is happy about the whole thing.

Contributed by
W. H. Dougherty

RELOCATED FROM THE "DRUMMOND RESETTLEMENT AREA"

Mr. and Mrs. N. L. Arganbright were both born and raised in Kansas. In 1919 they were persuaded to buy an 80 acres of wild land, eleven miles from Drummond, in Bayfield County, Wisconsin - the inducement being "cheap land." In 1921 they moved onto this farm, building a 16x24' house and a log barn that held five to six cows, plus a poultry house holding 125 hens. Over a period of years, 35 acres were cleared and put under the plow. The Arganbrights were a thrifty, industrious family and were at all times self-supporting.

However, Mr. Arganbright realized that he was located too far from markets, especially for dairy products; and that the distance to school was a handicap to his children. Furthermore, the sale of most of the wild land in his area to the U. S. Forest Service, coupled with the Bayfield County Zoning Ordinance enacted in 1934 prevented him from expanding his holdings. He was, therefore, very glad to sell his farm to the Resettlement Administration and look for another place in a more highly developed community.

On November 1, 1935, Mr. Arganbright, his wife, and family of five children moved to their present well-developed farm four miles west of Ashland on old U. S. Highway No. 2 and one mile from the Ashland Branch Experiment Station. This purchase consisted of eighty acres, fifty acres of which were under the plow, and modern buildings on the farm. He has later purchased another 280 acres of which 27 acres are now under the plow.

The Arganbright family has raised a total of eight children, three of whom are married, one son in College, and the other in local schools. One of the sons is now in partnership with his father and they have a herd of thirteen milk cows with a total of 22 head in all. With their extensive land holdings, there is good opportunity for expansion sufficient to provide incomes for both father and son.

Contributed by
R. J. Holvenstot

THE ONLY PETITION TO DISSOLVE A TOWN EVER PASSED IN WISCONSIN

To the county board of the county of Sawyer:

We, the undersigned, electors of the Town of Fishtrap, County of Sawyer, do hereby petition for the dissolution of said town:

(Signed by eighty seven petitioners)

PETITION

For the purpose of expressing our desire in view of dissolution of the Town of Fishtrap, Sawyer County, Wisconsin, we, the undersigned electors of said town do petition and ask that if referendum being voted upon this 7th day of April, 1936, gives expression that it is a will of a majority to so dissolve, that the territory of township 40 north, range 5 west, be placed by the county board of supervisors of Sawyer County, Wisconsin within the Town of Winter and entirely within the jurisdictions of that township government, it being deemed that the general interests of our territory are in common with the said Town of Winter and necessities of our greater progress are directed for such action.

(Signed by sixty three persons)

The following certification was read.

To the County Clerk of Sawyer County

I, Clarence Hubbell, Clerk of the Town of Fishtrap, do hereby certify that a majority of the votes cast at the last annual town meeting upon the question of dissolution of the town were in favor thereof.

In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand this 30th day of April, 1936.

(Signed) Clarence Hubbell
Town Clerk, Town of Fishtrap
(Seal) Sawyer County, Wisconsin

Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried the following resolution was adopted.

SAWYER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
RESOLUTION DISSOLVING THE TOWN OF FISHTRAP

WHEREAS more than fifty freeholders, residents of the Town of Fishtrap, and at least one-third of the electors thereof, have petitioned the county board of Sawyer County, Wisconsin to dissolve said Town of Fishtrap, the said petition having been filed in the office of the County Clerk of said county on March 5th, 1936 as provided by section 60.05 of the Wisconsin statutes, and

WHEREAS, in compliance with said section of the statutes, upon the question of dissolution a vote was taken in said town, after due advertisement, at the regular annual town election held on the 7th day of April, 1936 resulting in a majority of the votes being in favor of dissolution, which fact was duly certified to the county clerk of said county, by the clerk of said Town of Fishtrap.

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved and ordered that the said Town of Fishtrap, comprising Township forty north, range five west, be and is hereby dissolved, and said township comprising said Town of Fishtrap, is hereby added to and made a part of the Town of Winter; that the assets of said Town of Fishtrap shall upon the passage of this resolution pass to and become the property of the said Town of Winter, and the said Town of Winter shall be responsible for the debts and obligations of the said Town of Fishtrap.

The question being upon the passage of said resolution.

Those voting in favor -- 22; Those voting against -- 0.

OFFICERS OF THE TOWNS AT THE TIME OF CONSOLIDATION

Town of Fishtrap

Charles Howard, Chairman - Now
living at Rt. #1, Eau Claire
John Birket, Supervisor
John Sagert, Supervisor
Clarence Hubbell, Clerk
Mrs. Minnie Anderegg, Treasurer
Joseph Goodwin, Assessor

Population ~ 137

Assessed Valuation - \$71,839.00

Town of Winter

William Rankin, Chairman - Deceased
Andrew B. Anderson, Supervisor
Harry A. Nutting, Supervisor
Mrs. Elizabeth Crawford, Clerk
Martin Fadness, Treasurer
Mont Wiley, Assessor

Population - 915

Assessed Valuation - \$1,039,070.00



Charles Howard, Chairman of the former Town of Fishtrap, Sawyer County who was chiefly responsible for bringing about the consolidation of this town.

Mr. Howard said in commenting on this consolidation, "Two-thirds of our town was in forests. We had only 60 to 70 voters. We had to pay high school tuition to another town. Our people agreed that we did not have enough means to run a town. In view of these facts we thought it best for everyone concerned to dissolve and join in with the Town of Winter".

No one from Madison had anything to do with this program.

PLANNING THAT PAYS!

Saturday, September 9, 1950 was a memorable day for the Henry Packard family of Langlade County — that was the day they made their final payment on their F.O. account.

The Packards formerly resided in Forest County in a sub-marginal area (zoned land). Under the Land Utilization Program carried out by the Government in 1937 their sub-marginal unit was purchased and later planted to trees. Our predecessor agency, the Resettlement Administration, advanced \$5,490 for the acquisition of an 80 acre farm in the Township of Ackley, Langlade County, and for the purchase of personal property. Here, the Packards constructed a new barn, utilizing material razed from an old building; they also built a substantial stave silo; milk house; machine shed and repaired the dwelling.

This family has been very receptive to suggestions and were one of the first to utilize artificial insemination breeding methods on their herd together with a rigid program of culling, feeding and improved pastures. They had long ago discovered the advantages of renovating pastures and the use of commercial fertilizer. The Packards have nine children, one of whom is now married and has a P&S operating loan. The children have been active in 4-H Club work and the family in general has taken an interest in all leading community affairs.

In reviewing the case file, the following names of employees who have had contact with the family were noted: George L. Reznichek, L. G. Sorden, V. C. Starks, James H. Dance, W. A. Von Berg (deceased), and Elizabeth Sansum.

December 4, 1950

Farmers Home Administration
Antigo, Wisconsin

Dear Sir:

We are taking this opportunity to tell you of our appreciation of all that has been done for us through the Farmers Home Administration.....

Having started in 1937 with practically nothing and a family of four children, we now have our home and farm and nine children, 3 boys and 6 girls. We very sincerely hope this program will continue to go on helping families whom otherwise could not get a start.....

We could tell you in words so much more than in writing how we feel. But our thanks to each and all.

Sincerely, "A Satisfied Borrower"

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Packard & Family

Little Rice
Oneida County

ZONING SAVES MONEY

Within two years after the enactment of the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance, Mr. A. D. Clements, chairman of the Town of Little Rice reported a saving in \$285 in school transportation costs in his school district as a direct and immediate result of zoning.

Here's his story. "When we called for bids for school transportation in our school district last year, we found that these bids had always been made on the basis that isolated families in the northern section of the town would have to be taken care of. We pointed out that at the present time there were no families living there and that the land was zoned. Legal settlement and year long residence were prohibited there in the future because of zoning. The bidders said, "But there always are people who move into that community and we were protecting ourselves in our bids. If what you say is true, if that land is zoned, and if the zoning works, we can cut our bid for school transportation \$285 per year." They did cut their bid and the ordinance prevented new settlement in that area.

Contributed by Mr. Clements, 1936.

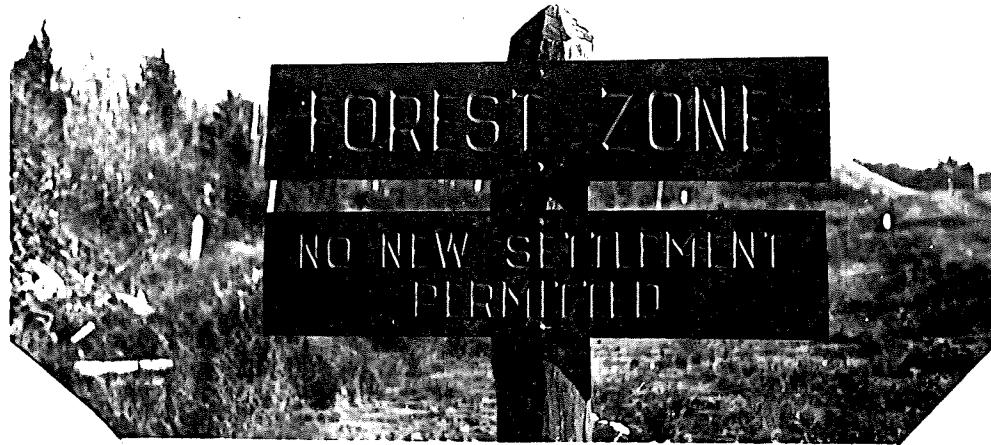
ONE OF MARINETTE COUNTY'S
LAST ISOLATED SETTLERS NOW RELOCATED

George Racette, who, with his wife, lived in the Town of Dunbar, 2 miles from a road in the Town of Dunbar has now been relocated. Marinette County traded him 80 acres of land, 30 acres cleared on a town road in the Town of Dunbar for the 40 acres he owned and lived on since 1927. This old "forty" of his was entirely surrounded by Marinette County Forest Crop Land and was in a restricted forestry district under Marinette County Zoning Ordinance.

In his old location he kept his roads plowed himself, the 2 miles from his home to the town road and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of town road to the village of Dunbar, in all $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles of road. He has done this for the past 23 years. He was too independent to demand that the town plow his roads. He is now about 50 years old and decided that he could not go through another winter under those conditions so we arranged the trade during the past summer, and he has now moved.

This has been a very interesting case. The cost to Marinette County was very small since the value of the 80 acres is probably in the neighborhood of \$400.00. The land given to him is not very productive, but he only keeps horses now since he no longer farms. He has made his living for the past 4 or 5 years working on timber sales on the Marinette County Forest. Prior to that he attempted to farm and always had a number of goats on his place. Mr. Racette has had many hard winters, including several in which he and his wife lived on porcupine and potatoes. His wife (they had no children) once told me that she had not been to town in over 10 years. Recently I visited him at this new location and was pleased to note that he was building a substantial house and barn and apparently is well satisfied with the exchange.

John H. Saemann
Marinette County
August, 1950



Roadside sign posted along main highways to designate beginning and ending of restricted use districts under Rural Zoning. This type of sign is now in use by a number of Northern Wisconsin counties.

Copies of This Document Have Been Sent to the Following Persons:

Copy No. 1 J. H. Beuscher, University Law School
2 I. L. Baldwin, Vice President, University of Wisconsin
3 Harvey Becker, County Agent, Oneida County
4 Vernon Carstensen, University History Dept.
5 W. W. Clark, Dir., & Arlie Mucks, Agricultural Extension
6 William Dougherty, County Agent, Washburn County
7 Charles B. Drewry, Madison, Wisconsin
8 Fred Evert, County Agent, Burnett County
9 R. K. Froker, Dean, Wis. College of Agriculture
10 Roy Holvenstot, County Agent, Bayfield County
11 Regent John D. Jones, Jr., Racine
12 Clifford Lord, Director, Wis. Historical Society
13 Ray Penn, Agricultural Economics
14 J. Price, U. S. Forest Service, Milwaukee
15 V. H. Quick & John Saemann, County Agents, Marinette County
16 W. A. Rowlands, Agricultural Extension
17 George Sieker, Attorney General's Office
18 L. G. Sorden, Agricultural Extension
19 Tom Schmidt, Director, Farmers Home Administration
20 Marvin Schweers, Coordinator, Soil Cons. Service
21 Ernest Swift, Director, Wis. Conservation Dept.
22 Fred Trenk, Extension Forester, University of Wis.
23 Sherman Weiss, County Agent, Sawyer County
24 F. G. Wilson, Wis. Conservation Dept.
25 G. L. Wright, Agricultural Extension

Planning, Zoning & Solid Waste Department Report

January 6, 2026

Planning & Zoning

- Onieda County article enclosed describing how rural zoning initially came about within the State of WI in the early 1930's
- Staff are working on conversion of imaging product from IMS 21 to Laserfiche. This will aide in scanning permits into permit tracking software.
- Beginning in January, LWR Depts will be working with Transcendent on converting tax software and permit tracking to a new program.

Solid Waste/Recycling

- 2026 Recycling Guides dispersed to Municipalities. A few increases in pricing for tires, e-waste and oil related items.



RESOLUTION – R2026-01-XX

To: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Oconto County Board of Supervisors

Re: **LITTLE RIVER SNOWMOBILE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT**

WHEREAS, the Forestry and Parks Department advertised replacing the Little River snowmobile bridge over the Little River; and

WHEREAS, the Forestry and Parks Department received a 100% cost share grant in the amount of \$400,000 to replace a wood bridge structure with a clear span bridge, and

WHEREAS, the Forestry and Parks Department resources received **INSERT #** bids for the above mentioned project from the following; and

INSERT BID RESULTS

WHEREAS, there is no fiscal impact to the 2026 budget as Oconto County was awarded grant S-5960 Oconto County Little River bridge replacement 2022-23 in the amount of \$300,000 and RTP-119-23D Oconto County River State Trail Bridge Replacement in the amount of \$100,000

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Oconto County Board of Supervisors does hereby approve **Insert Contractor Info.** bid for **Insert Bid Specs.**

Submitted this 22th day of January 2026

By: LAND AND WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tim Cole, Chair
Patrick J. Scanlan
Mike Beyer
Keith Schneider
Wayne Kaczrowski

Electronically Reviewed by Corporation Counsel on xx-xx-xxxx -

Adopted by an electronic vote: XX Ayes, XX Nays, XX Absent, XX Abstain, XX Vacant



**OFFICE OF
FORESTRY & PARKS**
A Division of
Land & Water Resources Department

Forest & Parks Department Report

January 6, 2026

Active Timber Sales

- 396-22 – Krueger – Machickanee Red Maple – Still in progress
- 406-26 – Krueger – Salamander Sale – Resumed cutting
- 411-12 – Wild Rivers – Second Release – Wild Rivers is moving into this sale. Steve Kaufman held a presale meeting in early December.
-

Department Activities

- The Forest & Parks crew have been working on mulching and clearing along county forest roads.
- Brickyard Contractors removed 16 dead ash trees and 5 stumps from the Anderson Lake boat landing area.
- Casey Tree Service removed a large cottonwood tree at the North Bay Shore campground.
- Met with Robert E. Lee Engineering to go over the North Bay Shore Harbor Project prior to sending it out for bids. The project is tentatively planned for late summer/fall of 2026.
- Road access permit renewals were sent out to 35 applicants. These road access permits will expire in February 1, 2026.
- Additional picnic table frames were ordered from Custom Manufacturing. Need to finish replacing picnic tables at Chute Pond camp sites and the remainder of them will be placed in the out-parks and picnic areas.
- The Forester position is posted with a December 26, 2025 deadline. Interviews will be held in January.
- Permits and bids are being worked on for the Little River Bridge.
- Put out a request for quotes to spray and trench 52 acres in the Blue Road and CFR 401, Town of Breed area.
- The snowmobile sign order arrived. The clubs are making arrangements to get their signs.
- The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant to purchase the Birr Property in the Town of Morgan has been awarded. Working on submitting a loan request with the DNR.

Timber Sale Financial Statement

For the Period: 1/1/2025 through 12/30/2025

Status: Active	Estimated Volume				Scaled Volume				Payments		Deposits		Contract Orig Date	Contract Expires	LOC Expires		
	Contractor	Sale#	Mbf	Tons	Cords	Est Val	Mbf	Tons	Cords	Scaled Value	Balance	Cash	LOC				
Marshal Giese Trucking LLC	372-20	279	5,695		161,383					0		31,958		05/05/20	05/30/26	08/30/28	
Krueger Lumber Co	396-22	175	1,465		72,084		23	676	0	12,872	16,891	-2,333	13,592		05/30/22	05/30/26	08/30/26
Wild Rivers Forestry	404-23	39	4,722		93,979		0	0	0			0	17,900		05/03/23	05/30/26	08/30/27
Wild Rivers Forestry	405-23	18	2,262		55,300		0	0	0			0	10,532		05/03/23	05/30/26	08/30/27
Krueger Lumber Co	406-23	57	1,345		33,552		2	877	0	11,065	23,755	-1,319	6,390		05/03/23	05/30/26	08/30/27
Wild Rivers Forestry	411-24	90	1,800		38,196		0	0	0	0	7,639	0	7,639		05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Wild Rivers Forestry	412-24	24	2,070		26,032		0	0	0			0	5,206		05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Marshal Giese Trucking LLC	413-24	13	2,070		27,905		0	0	0			0			05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Frank's Logging Inc.	414-24	14	1,190		17,288		0	0	0			0			05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Wild Rivers Forestry	417-24		2,075		81,623		0	0	0			0			05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Wild Rivers Forestry	418-24		1,391		57,044		0	0	0			0			05/07/24	05/30/26	08/30/28
Bell Timber, Inc.	419-24	14	1,008		44,233		0	0	0			0	8,847		05/07/24	05/30/26	
Wild Rivers Forestry	407-23	161	2,715		26,781		0	0	0			0		0	05/03/23	05/30/27	08/30/27
Frank's Logging Inc.	423-25	6	2,089		42,379		5	1,950	0	37,169	37,791	0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Biewer Wisconsin Sawmill Inc.	427-25	145	2,125		43,392		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Frank's Logging Inc.	428-25	9	1,605		25,502		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Marshal Giese Trucking LLC	429-25		1,525		44,430		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Frank's Logging Inc.	430-25	37	2,270	45	50,856		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Bell Timber, Inc.	431-25	4	2,035		53,978		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Stella Jones	432-25		3,785		158,706		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Frank's Logging Inc.	433-25	6	2,320		55,251		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Pomeroy Forest Products LLC	434-25	10	1,800		29,908		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Timber Products	435-25	60	975		21,858		0	0	0	0	4,372	-4,372			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Pomeroy Forest Products LLC	436-25	11	532		8,104		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/27	08/30/29
Frank's Logging Inc.	425-25	113	3,597		41,508		0	0	0			0			05/06/25	05/30/29	08/30/31

Current Payments

December Pmts: 14,702.56
2025 Pmts: 556,832.53

Recreation Deputy Report

December 2025

ATV/UTV

5 total ATV/UTV complaints

1 Citation

BOATING

0 Hours Submitted

FORESTRY/PARKS

Report of person(s) camping at Lot 87 at the Chute Pond Campground without paying. Contact was made with them multiple times. Parties have since vacated the campsite and removed most of the property that was being stored at the site.

Stand seized from County Land north of CFR 201. Ladder stand had been set up and locked to tree. There was no name and DNR customer number attached to stand.

Report of person operating ATV on County land north of berm on CFR 301. Subject utilized ATV to retrieve deer that he shot. Citation was issued for operating ATV on prohibited/closed property.

SNOWMOBILE

Lease agreement was set up with Koehne Powersports Inc. 2 2025 Polaris 650 sleds were rented for the season. Sleds were picked up the week of December 15th.

Ryan Zahn

Recreation Deputy

Oconto County Sheriff's Office