Shawano County
Land Conservation Department

Annual Report
2025

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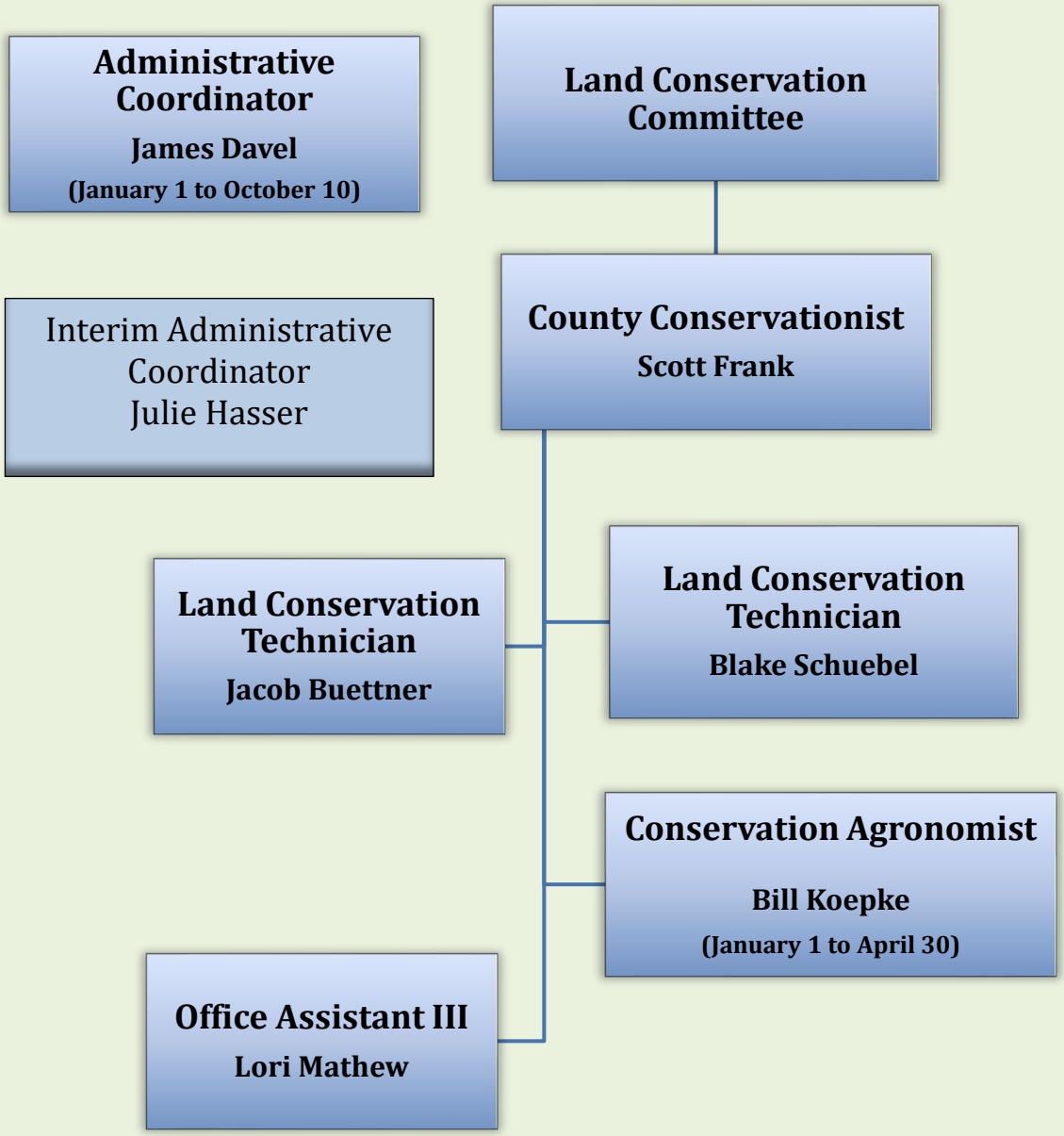
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Land Conservation Department



MISSION STATEMENT

To administer Shawano County's conservation programs and policies and provide technical assistance to help people conserve, improve and sustain our natural resources.

OUR VISION: A prosperous and productive community in harmony with a quality environment.

SHAWANO COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (LCC) HISTORY

The Shawano County Land Conservation Committee (LCC) was originally organized by County Board resolution in April 1945, as the Soil and Water Conservation District, a special purpose unit of state government. Through a statewide reorganization, it became the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) of the County Board in June 1982. The LCC oversees the coordination of the county directed natural resource programs.

The staff members of the Land Conservation Department and the specialists and agents of the cooperating agencies provide technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners for planning, designing, installing, and maintaining conservation management systems and practices.

County

(1) **Land Conservation Department (LCD)**

- Provide technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners.
- Administer county and state land and water conservation programs.
- Administer county Livestock Waste Management Ordinance No. 3-06 and Livestock Facility Licensing Ordinance No. 1-18.

Cooperating Agencies

(2) **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

- Financial and technical assistance to landowners and units of government in development and implementing conservation plans and practices through various programs.

(3) **USDA - Farm Services Agency (FSA)**

- Financial assistance to landowners to carry out conservation measures.

(4) **University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX)**

- Educational assistance to individuals, groups and units of government relating to agriculture, resource conservation, youth development, and community improvement.

(5) **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)**

- Financial assistance for LCD staff and support.
- Financial assistance to landowners for soil and water conservation practices through implementation of county Land & Water Resource Management Plan.
- Working Lands Initiative comprised of the following programs: Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA) provide income tax credits to those meeting eligibility requirements.
- Provides financial help and training to farmers, agronomists, and agriculture educators to write Nutrient Management Plans.

(6) **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)**

- Technical and financial assistance with fishery, pond, and stream management, agricultural runoff, forestry and wildlife work.

(7) **USDA - Rural Development**

- Loans for farm ownership, conservation measures, private well replacement, and sewer and water loans to municipalities.

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

To help further our mission and vision, the LCC continued its membership with:

(1) Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, Inc.

- Supports the efforts of county LCC's and staff.
- Provides training, coordinates development of conservation standards, promotes youth education, builds partnerships and advocates for its members.

(2) Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association

- Made up of nine counties (Marinette, Oconto, Menominee, Shawano, Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Sheboygan) in Northeast Wisconsin.
- Promotes collaboration to further the common interests of county conservation programs in the area.
- Elect area representatives to the Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Board of Directors.

(3) Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.

- Identifying needs within their communities and working with local citizens, organizations, groups, and agencies to create workable solutions.
- Four Focus Areas: Land Conservation, Water Management, Community Development, and Land Management.

(4) Timberland Invasives Partnership

- Cooperative relationship for effective implementation of terrestrial invasive species management in Langlade, Menominee, Oconto, and Shawano counties and the Menominee Nation and Stockbridge-Munsee Community.

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Program Administration

- Partnered with Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance to implement a Climate Smart Agronomy grant launched under U.S. Department of Agriculture. Unfortunately, this program was discontinued by the federal government in April 2025.

- Administered and utilized state cost-share funds provided under **Chapter 92 - Soil and Water Conservation and Animal Waste Management** for technical and administrative work.

- Continued implementation of the **Shawano County Land & Water Resource Management Plan** which guides the direction of conservation programs and makes the County eligible for grant funds to carry out the work.

- Administered the county **Livestock Waste Management Ordinance**. Reviewed and approved applications and plans for 14 livestock waste management permits including waste storage, waste transfer and waste storage closure.

- Administered the county **Livestock Facility Licensing Ordinance.** Reviewed and approved applications for one new license and seven license modifications.

- Continued annual on-farm reviews (35 site visits) of compliance with soil & water conservation standards for landowners participating in the **Farmland Preservation Program (FPP).** 189 landowners with Certificates of Compliance were eligible to claim the state income tax credits.

- County tax levy funding (2025 Budget) of $5,000 was used for private well water testing in the Townships of Angelica, Green Valley, Hartland, Lessor, and Maple Grove.

- Continued the transition of work, activities, and funding of the WDNR Surface Water Grant for **Lake Monitoring and Protection Network** program to our partner, Waterways Association of Menominee and Shawano Counties, Inc. (WAMSCO).

- Developed the **2025 Work Plan and Soil & Water Resource Management Grant** request to WI DATCP to continue support of the County's conservation programs.

- Continued partnership with USDA-NRCS, Waupaca County, and Oconto County to promote the **Upper Fox-Wolf and Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farm Networks** in Shawano County. Multiple field days were held in both watersheds to showcase soil and water conservation practices.

- **Shawano County Watershed Advisory Council Producer-Led Watershed Group** was formed in 2025. Our Vision Statement is a watershed depicted by healthy soils, clean water, and sustainable farms. Our Mission Statement is be responsible stewards of the land that advocate for soil health and water quality through outreach, education, and conservation practices.

Technical Assistance

- Worked with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and **received engineering approvals** for multiple conservation practice design plans.
- Administered and provided technical assistance for the **Wildlife Damage, Abatement and Claims Program** in Shawano County. The LCC approved one damage claim for crop loss. Hunters donated 11 deer that resulted in 405 lbs. of venison distributed to local charitable organizations. Expenses are reimbursed by the WI Department of Natural Resources.
- Provided **technical and financial assistance** to county residents for planning, surveying, design, layout, and installation of soil and water conservation practices. One project included:
    - **Waste storage system closures**. There was one project completed at Dennis Przybylski's property and cost shared at 70% with Soil & Water Resource Management grant funding from WI DATCP.

Shawano LCD photo

Shawano LCD photo

    - **Waste storage and Waste transfer systems**. There was one project completed at Neil Christianson's property and cost shared with Targeted Runoff Management grant funding from WI DNR and Engineering Reserve grant funding from WI DATCP.

Drone photo provided by Kori Halstead (Waterways Association of Menominee and Shawano Counties)

Information & Education

- Our 4th annual **Youth Conservation Field Day at Wilson Creek Orchard** (near Wittenberg) was a huge success. There were approximately 200 5th grade students from Wittenberg, Birnamwood, Marion, Menominee and Tigerton schools who enjoyed being in the outdoors and experiencing 10 stations filled with information and activities related to conservation and preservation. There were numerous donations and grants to make this event possible. A new grant received this year was from the Green Bay Packers Foundation for our 2026 events.

- Our 12th annual **Youth Conservation Field Day at Navarino Nature Center** was a great event. There were approximately 200 5th grade students from Olga Brenner, Gresham, Sacred Heart, St. James, and St. Paul schools who enjoyed being in the outdoors and experiencing 10 stations filled with information and activities related to conservation and preservation. There were numerous donations and grants to make this event possible.

- In partnership with the National Association of Conservation Districts and our WI Land and Water Conservation Association, the LCD coordinated a local competition for the **Youth Conservation Awareness Poster Contest**.

    - The 2025 theme was "Home is where the Habitat is." There were 176 students from Bonduel, Bowler, Menominee Indian, Sacred Heart Catholic, St. James Lutheran, St. Paul Lutheran, Tigerton and Wolf River Lutheran schools that participated. Our local competition was held in January 2025. First place posters advanced to Lake Michigan Area in February. First place posters at the Lake Michigan Area advanced to the State Contest held in March. At the State Contest, the poster made by Olivia Kast from Sacred Heart Catholic School received third place. Those that placed (1st, 2nd and 3rd) at the various levels are shown below while being recognized at the Shawano County Board meeting on March 26, 2025.

Photo by NEW Media

- Continued activities of the **Shawano County Invasive Species Strategic Management Plan**, with project partners Waterways Association of Menominee and Shawano Counties (WAMSCO), Timberland Invasives Partnership (TIP), and WI DNR.
- In partnership with WI DATCP and UWEX, we continued our 13th annual **Nutrient Management Farmer Training Program** in the County with our workshop on December 8, 2025 to help farmers become more aware of the value of proper management of legumes and manure as fertilizer and be certified to write their own Nutrient Management Plans.

- Continued to be an **active member of the state and area associations of Land Conservation Committees and Departments** including Wisconsin Land+Water Conservation Association, Lake Michigan Area Land and Water Conservation Association, and Lumberjack Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

- Coordinated and hosted our annual **<u>Conservation Partners – Soil & Water Conservation Tour</u>** on August 7 in western Shawano County to showcase multiple efforts by landowners to restore, protect and enhance our natural resources. Tour stops included the Tilleda Falls Campground (shoreline restoration), Stockbridge Munsee Community (monitoring fish passage), Harold Ehrenreich (prairie restoration), and John Hanson/James Hanson (deer exclusion fence).

CONSERVATION PRACTICES/ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Cost-Share Funding WI DATCP . . . . . $139,527 WI DNR . . . . . $224,803 FWWA* . . . . . $1,366 Multi-Discharger Variance . . . $3,712 County $0	Farmland Preservation Program (On farm compliance reviews) . . 29 (Certificates of Compliance issued) . 35 (Landowners in compliance) . . . 189
Nutrient Management Plans (Acres reported) 102,949	Shoreland Restoration (0 sites) . . . . . 0 lin ft . . . 0 sq ft
Tree Planting Program (DNR coordination) Trees planted (private lands). . . 80,500 Trees planted (state lands) . . . . . 500 Planting machine rentals . . . . . 4 Planting bar rentals 0	Livestock Waste Management Ordinance (Permits Issued) . . . . . 14 Livestock Facilities Licensing Ordinance (Applications Received) . . . . . 1 (Licenses Approved) . . . . . 1 (Licenses Modified) 7
Waste Storage Facility 11	
Waste Transfer Systems 10	Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program (Landowners Assisted) . . . . . 13 Landowners Granted Shooting Permits (By DNR) . . Bear 1; Geese 1; Deer 11 Hunt for the Hungry (Deer donated and processed) . . . 11
Waste Storage Closure 6	
*Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance (FWWA)	

LAND CONSERVATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

		YEAR(s)
1.	To secure funding from WI DNR, WI DATCP and NRCS for cost sharing and technical assistance to assist landowners implement soil & water conservation best management practices while meeting federal, state and county standards.	2025
2.	Implementation of long-term strategies of the Shawano County Land & Water Resource Management Plan.	2016 - 2026
3.	To continue assisting landowners through the Farmland Preservation Program's conservation compliance provisions.	2025
4.	Continue implementation of the Shawano County Forest Stewardship Management Plan.	2013-2037
5.	Implement an effective education, monitoring and prevention program for invasive species (IS) that will provide best management practices for long term natural resource benefits.	2025