

# Land Resources and Environment Department: August 2024 Monthly Report

## Land Conservation

- Staff attended Basic Agriculture 101 training in Hancock on August 1st.
- Staff assisted SSWIG and UW-Madison Division of Extension with hosting a field day at Ken Nolden's Farm on August 7th. A total of 15 people attended the event to learn more about cover crops and composting.
- Staff attended the Growing Outreach Conference August 15-16 in Madison to learn more about effectively engaging with landowners and agricultural producers.
- Staff attended the Annual Nutrient Management Regional Meeting on August 21st in Dodgeville.
- Staff have been verifying that permit conditions addressing manure management prohibitions in Chapter 26 have been met on livestock structures constructed in 2023.
- Staff are busy with construction supervision and installation verification of conservation practices being built.

## Agroforestry Pasture Walk



On August 29th, an agroforestry pasture walk was held at the Savanna Institute North Farm near Spring Green. The North Farm is a demonstration farm established by Savanna Institute in 2020. The pasture walk highlighted sheep being grazed amongst chestnut trees while another part of the farm featured alley cropping of root vegetables between rows hazelnut shrubs. Over 40 people were in attendance at this event that was a collaboration with American Farmland Trust and WDATCP.

## Mentoring Young Conservationists



Every year, staff mentor students who are interested in the conservation field. They are taken to the field to get their feet dirty (literally), learn about different projects conservation staff work on and are given an opportunity to use the same equipment we use in the field. In August, Serge took Misty Kelley out to collect and identify macroinvertebrates from the Baraboo River. Based on the species collected, a conservationist can determine if a waterway is healthy or needs help.

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## Planning and Zoning

- Staff are working with OpenGov, the new online permitting platform, focusing this month on record discovery. We shared workflow information and sample documents with the design team, who have started formatting our permitting process into the site.
- Staff are working with Woodland, Reedsburg, Winfield, Dellona, Freedom and Franklin on updating their comprehensive plans.
- Staff coordinated with Land Records on current and future projects for the Land Use Plan.
- Implementation of the GSST plan continues following a ground truthing exercise (see more below). As a result of the ground truthing, staff will be working with WDNR to delineate wetlands and the City of Reedsburg to establish a trail easement through city property.

## Marking Ordinary High Water Mark- Lake Redstone



LRE staff was contacted by a Lake Redstone property owner who is working on plans to develop his undeveloped lot with lake frontage. The property owner requested information on zoning requirements. During the discussion, he also requested staff mark the ordinary high water mark so that he can verify that he meets the 75' shoreland setback for their proposed house. Staff flagged the ordinary high water mark and provided this photo as reference which is edited to better show the flag location and ordinary high water mark. The water level was almost at the ordinary high water mark due to the amount of precipitation received this spring and summer.

## Great Sauk State Trail Ground Truthing



Ground Truthing for the Great Sauk State Trail project involves physically verifying and validating data collected from aerial imagery and GIS data such as property boundaries, floodplains, and wetlands. This process helps ensure that the information gathered from remote sources accurately reflects real conditions on the ground, improving staff's ability to consider the need for trail easements and detailed use of public road and railroad right-of-way. Pat Gavinski, Sauk County Highway Commissioner, pictured to the left (with hat), provided an engineer's perspective regarding the feasibility of overcoming challenging areas with proper design and construction techniques. The information gathered during the ground truthing will also be utilized as part of the process to select and hire an engineering consultant to assist with the development of trail construction plans.

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## Parks and Recreation

- Funding was received from FEMA in the amount of \$15,190.16 for the Hemlock Dam.
- The pier at Hemlock County Park was barricaded closed due to ongoing damage and safety concerns.
- A site survey for the maintenance building project was completed.
- Free tick removal kits and bug spray were handed out to park users for free, compliments of Sauk County Public Health.
- Staff continued to monitor and inspect dams after rainfalls.
- Shade structure posts were installed near the beach at White Mound County Park.
- Gravel was added to the shoulder of the Great Sauk State Trail.
- Work continued on the rustic campsites.
- Bluffview County Park was inspected due to damage to the playground surfacing.
- The dam at White Mound Lake was inspected by the Sauk County Dive Team.

## Improvements continue at White Mound County Park



The Highway Department was back to continue making improvements to the road in the campground. Existing asphalt was removed, rock was installed and new asphalt was added. The road improvement project should be completed in September. Other improvements include improving the horse trails in certain wet locations, adding a bat house and removal of vault toilets at the horse campground.

## More summer events held



The outdoor movie night at White Mound County Park was back, featuring Shrek. Approximately 65 people were in attendance. Other events included Music in the Park, with 'Tis and the Mark Croft Duo performing. These performances saw approximately 75 and 60 attendees, respectively. One more outdoor movie night is scheduled for September 14, and other fun events are planned for this fall.