



AG REPORTER NEWSLETTER

Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Dept.

2026 Spring Edition: May, June, July, August



Upcoming Events & Important Dates

- **May 20, 2026:** County Board Meeting at 7:00 PM
- **June 1, 2026:** Farmland Preservation Self-Certification Postcards will be mailed to participants. These postcards are due by ****July 1, 2026****.
- **June 1, 2026:** Agriculture, Extension, Land and Water Conservation Committee Meeting at 3:00 PM
- **June 17, 2026:** County Board Meeting at 7:00 PM
- **June 18, 2026:** Lake Wisconsin Producer Led, Systems for Soil Health & Dron Demonstration, Fifth Generation Farms, Lodi from 10am-12pm with lunch to follow!
- **June 20, 2026:** Moo-Day Brunch at Rob & Jenny Baerwolf Farm W3220 Bristol Rd, Columbus
- **July 1, 2026:** Deadline for Farmland Preservation Self-Certification Postcards! Landowners and farmers, if you haven't received your postcard, please contact our office.
- **July 8-12, 2026:** 160th Lodi Agricultural Fair, Lodi
- **July 6, 2026:** Agriculture, Extension, Land and Water Conservation Committee Meeting at 3:00 PM
- **July 15, 2026:** County Board Meeting at 7:00 PM
- **July 15, 2026:** USDA Farm Service Agency: Crop Acreage Reporting Due
- **July 29- August 2, 2026:** 175th Columbia County Fair, Portage
- **August 3, 2026:** Agriculture, Extension, Land and Water Conservation Committee Meeting at 3:00 PM
- **August 19, 2026:** County Board Meeting at 7:00 PM
- **September 24, 2026:** Wisconsin River Basin Bash at Conservation Night by the Lake, Schoepp Farm, Lodi

Important News to Share?

If you are a member of or work for an agricultural organization or group and would like to advertise your events or important updates to Columbia County Residents in the Ag Reporter, please contact our office at
(608) 742-9670

Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWi.gov

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LWCD UPDATES

AG OUTREACH SPECIALIST UPDATE

Farewell to Casey Bennett!

Casey has been an invaluable part of our department and played a key role in shaping the Agricultural Outreach Specialist position since it was created in 2022. As he begins this next chapter, we wish him tremendous success in all his future endeavors. He will truly be missed.

Casey has accepted a new position closer to home with Rock County Land & Water, where he will continue his important work in conservation and agriculture.

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of the Ag Reporter! Wisconsin certainly proved to be unpredictable this past April, with rain, flooding, and tornadoes seemingly becoming a daily event. While this weather isn't ideal for homeowners and farmers, one positive outcome has been the vibrant green fields of cover crops springing up across the county after the rain. It's heartening to see farmers embracing conservation practices that enhance soil health, clearly visible to those passing by the fields.

Our department provides cost-sharing opportunities for practices like cover crops, should you wish to give them a try. Members of the Lake WI Farmer Led Council have extensive experience with these methods and are eager to share their insights if you're looking for a farmer's perspective on how and where to begin. Give us a call, and we can help you access the resources you need.



The primary focus of Ag Outreach this winter was on ****Nutrient Management Farmer Education**** training. Our department organized a dedicated training day for Nutrient Management Education, along with two workshops for Nutrient Management Plan Development. Additionally, we provided one-on-one assistance and reviews for Nutrient Management Plans. Collaborative training sessions were also held with Green Lake County, UW Extension, and DATCP to engage underserved communities in soil health education, composting, and the creation of nutrient management plans. It's truly rewarding to witness the growth of these training sessions year after year.

Transition in Columbia County Ag Outreach

Ag Outreach in Columbia County is poised for a transition in the upcoming growing season. By the time you read this update, I will have stepped down from my role as the Agricultural Outreach Specialist to pursue an opportunity closer to home and family. I am grateful for the privilege of assisting with your agronomic concerns over the past four years. I sincerely hope that the information and events I provided have been not only informative and engaging but also genuinely helpful. I deeply appreciate all the support I received while establishing myself in Columbia County, as well as the friendships and trust I built along the way.

It is my wish that you extend the same warmth and support to the next Agricultural Outreach Specialist as they settle in and continue the mission of delivering agricultural education and outreach to the residents of Columbia County.

Please keep an eye on your email for our Ag Snapshot and visit our Facebook page for updates on new events and opportunities. If you have any agricultural questions or if your group would like to host a presenter at an event, please feel free to reach out. The Columbia LWCD staff will be more than happy to assist you.

Take care,

Casey Bennett

Agricultural Outreach Specialist

Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Department

COLUMBIA COUNTY LAND & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

The Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources that define Columbia County, Wisconsin. From fertile soils and clean waterways to thriving ecosystems and productive landscapes, our mission is to support the long-term health and sustainability of the county's environment. We work collaboratively with individuals and communities to ensure that these resources remain vibrant and resilient for generations to come.

To fulfill this mission, LWCD provides a comprehensive range of services designed to meet the needs of landowners, farmers, and local governments.



Back Row Left to Right: Tim O'Leary, Todd Rietmann, Chris Arnold, Casey Bennett, Kurt Calkins. **Front Row Left to Right:** Briana Enger, Anastasia Wallner, Kelly Maginnis

Land & Water Conservation Department Programs

(this is not a comprehensive list):

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP):** This program provides financial incentives for landowners to install conservation practices along waterways, such as filter strips, to reduce runoff and protect water quality.
- **Farmland Preservation Program:** This program helps protect agricultural land by providing tax credits to landowners who maintain their land in agricultural production.
- **Land & Water Resource Management Plan:** Project, Practices Implementation, Technical Assistance and Cost-Sharing
 - Well Abandonment
 - Manure Storage Abandonment
 - Grassed Waterways (delivering to wetlands/water)
 - Intensive (rotational grazing) management
 - Livestock watering facilities in conjunction with streambank pasturing
 - Diversions (clean water around barnyards) and roof gutters
 - Conservation Tillage (No-till emphasis)
 - Contour Farming
 - Contour strip cropping
- **Nutrient Management Planning:** In Wisconsin, every farm should have a nutrient management plan. Farms will adhere to a Nutrient Management plan if they:
 - Participate in the Farmland Preservation Program,
 - Are offered cost-sharing to develop a plan,
 - Accept cost-sharing for manure storage systems or cover crops,
 - Are large livestock operations, or
 - Are governed by local ordinances regarding manure storage or livestock
- **Outreach & Education:** Landowner and agricultural workshops throughout the year, assistance to local agricultural groups, Youth Conservation Awareness Poster & Speaking Contest, Youth Education Presentations to schools and small groups. If you are interested in hosting a speaking sessions on topics such as Watershed Shoreland Habitats, Native Pollinators, Native and Invasive Plants, Soils & Soil Health and Career Exploration our staff would be more than happy to come and speak to your group.
- **Priority Watershed Program:** This program targets water quality concerns in specific watersheds within Columbia County, collaborating with landowners and local governments to apply conservation measures
- **Tree & Shrub Sale Program:** Every spring in April the Columbia County LWCD hosts an annual Bare Root Tree & Shrub Sale. These trees and shrubs are available at a low cost for landowners. Orders are accepted from November - April with trees and shrubs for pick-up at the end of April.
- **Wildlife Damage & Abatement:** This program helps landowners manage wildlife damage through various DNR programs

AGRICULTURE, EXTENSION, LAND & WATER COMMITTEE

We would like to welcome the new 2026 Land & Water Committee Members!

Chair: Brad Cook
Vice Chair: Rich Bailey
Secretary: Denise Brusveen
David Mickelson
Nate Moll

The Agriculture, Extension, Land and Water Conservation Committee convenes on the 1st Monday of every month at 3:00 PM.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

June 1, 2026 is the last day to submit your 2026 Nutrient Management Plan.

You can submit your updated 2026 Nutrient Management Plan via email to ColumbiaNMP590@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

2026 Farmland Preservation On-site Inspections

Farmland Preservation Program Participants in the following Townships will have their 4-year NR 151 Agricultural Performance Inspection during the Spring/Summer of 2026:

- Town of Fort Winnebago
- Town of Lewiston
- Town of Marcellon
- Town of Springvale



\$992, 291

Total FPP Tax Credits
Claimed in 2025 for
the 2024 Tax Year by
Farmers in Columbia
County

The Wisconsin **Farmland Preservation Program (FPP)** is a state initiative, administered by [DATCP](#), that helps farmers and local governments protect agricultural land, minimize land-use conflicts, and promote soil and water conservation. It is a voluntary, incentive-based program allowing eligible landowners to claim state income tax credits.

Key Aspects of the Program

- **Purpose:** Protects agricultural land from development while promoting sustainable farming practices.
- **Incentives:** Participating landowners can claim tax credits of up to \$10.00 per acre if they meet specific criteria
- **Eligibility:** Landowners must be Wisconsin residents, have their land in a certified zoning district or an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and meet soil and water conservation standards set by the state.
- **Revenue Requirements:** The farm must produce at least \$6,000 in gross farm revenue in the past year or over \$18,000 the previous three years

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

DOES YOUR FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM CERTIFICATE NEED UPDATES?

If you've made changes to your Certificate of Compliance (COC) such as:

Change in Title (Create LLC, Trust, etc.)

Bought or sold parcels

Split or merged parcels

You must contact the LWCD to receive a new updated FPP COC to ensure there are no issues when claiming your 2026 FPP Tax Credit.

(608) 742-9670 or Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWi.gov

Farmland Preservation Self-Certification Postcard Due July 1, 2026


FPP participants will be required to maintain their eligibility as follows:

- Annual submit a FPP Self-Certification Postcard
- Annually submit an updated 590 NM Plan & Checklist
- Receive an on-site NR 151 Compliance Status Review once every 4 years

The Self-Certification Postcards will be mailed to all Farmland Preservation Participants. Participants will have the option to complete the postcard online on our website here: <https://ascent.co.columbia.wi.us//PermitManagement/LandWater/CertificatePostcard> OR you can return the postcard to the Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department or over the phone by calling our office directly (608) 742-9670.

FPP Participants who do not maintain their eligibility by submitting the annual self-certification postcard by July 1, 2026, annually submitting an updated 590 Nutrient Management Plan and Checklist, and maintaining NR 151 Compliance, can have their Certificate of Compliance ID # voided with the Department of Revenue, thus removing their ability to claim the Farmland Preservation Tax Credit for the applicable tax season.

Questions? Please contact our office at (608) 742-9670

 COLUMBIA COUNTY Land & Water Conservation Dept.	Phone: (608) 742-9670 www.co.columbia.wi.us Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWi.Gov
Columbia County Farmland Preservation Compliance Self Certification <small>Failure to submit the FPP certification postcard as required by ATCP 50.16 (5)(c)(1) may result in suspension of your Certification of Compliance with WI Dept of Revenue for this Tax Season.</small>	
NR 151 Compliance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1. If you or your operator updated your NRCS 590 NMP Plan & Checklist for the current growing season, has it been submitted to the LWCD?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Any active Gully Erosion present in my fields (Required for NRCS 590 Standard)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Is there any process wastewater discharge entering waters of the State (NR151.055)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Is a manure storage facility present?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Is there a 5 ft tillage setback present from the top of the bank? N/A? <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
All Livestock Producers Shall Comply With These Prohibitions (NR 151.08)	
6. Are any Livestock Present? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (If "No" leave question 7,8,9 blank)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7. Are there unconfined manure piles in a WQMA (within 300 ft stream or 1000 ft lake)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Is there direct discharge from feedlots or stored manure entering waters of the State?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
9. I have self-sustaining vegetative cover on all streambanks accessible to livestock.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
**A \$10.00 LATE FEE will be charged if returned after July 1st **	
Landowner Signature: _____	
Contact Phone Number: _____	(Required)
Contact Email: _____	

TREE & SHRUB SALE

2026 Review



ABOUT THE TREE & SHRUB SALE

Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department has been selling seedling trees, shrubs and supplies for over 45 years! Since its inception, the program has distributed more than 1.6 million seedlings, contributing to environmental restoration, wildlife habitat, and beautification across Columbia County and Wisconsin.

The Tree & Shrub Sale and Pick-Up takes place in April on the third Thursday of the month at the Columbia County Fairgrounds in Portage.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

This year, we were fortunate to have an incredible group of student volunteers from Rio Middle School and the Portage High School Science Club. Students were able to work besides experts in the natural resources field and they received a presentation from Columbia County Forester, Dylan Bell. We truly appreciate all the helping hands that assisted us in bundling, labeling, and sorting orders for our Tree Sale!

54,305
Trees/Shrubs Sold

2,900
5ft Tree Tubes Sold

1,775
Tree Stakes Sold



Columbia County Land & Water
Conservation Dept.
112 E. Edgewater St
Portage WI 53901

2026 COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER & SPEAKING CONTEST OVERVIEW



COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER AND SPEAKING CONTEST 2026 OVERVIEW

Conservation Awareness Speaking Contest

Nineteen students competed in the **Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Dept. Conservation Speaking Contest on Wednesday, January 21, 2026**. Each student prepared a speech about a conservation topic of their choice!

Elementary Division (5th-6th Grade)

- 1st Place** – Adalyn Howe “Microplastics: Tiny Pieces Big Problems”
- 2nd Place** – Abbie Brusveen “How Dung Beetles Help the Soil”
- 3rd Place** – Coleman Bell “Conserving Wisconsin Turtles”

Junior Division (7th-8th Grade)

- 1st Place** – Gracelynn Schultz “Water Quality”
- 2nd Place** – Sofia Bell “Rusty Patched Bumblebee Conservation”
- 3rd Place** – Madelynn Hinner “Conserving Water”

Senior Division (9th-12th Grade)

- 1st Place** – Hannah Brusveen “Glyphosate’s Impact on Land Conservation”
- 2nd Place** – Kyle Brusveen “Weeds: Nature’s Repair Plants for Healthier Soil”



Conservation Awareness Poster Contest

We had 362 Posters Submitted to Columbia County Conservation Poster Contest on January 21, 2026. This year we again hosted the Columbia County Inclusive Conservation Poster Contest for students who need a little extra help completing their posters. The 2026 theme was “Soil. Where it all Begins.” School Districts Participating were Poynette, Cambria, Portage, Lodi, Pardeeville, Rio, Coman and St. Mary’s in Portage

Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Dept. awards 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners with a \$25, \$20, and \$15 check.

Contest winners receive AMAZING prize packages, generously donated by local businesses:

A&W Restaurant, Portage
Baraboo Children’s Museum
Buffalo Phil’s Pizza & Grille
Cardinal Glass Industries FG
Carol’s Cones
Cascade Mountain, Portage
Columbus Area Aquatic Center
Comfort Suites Wisconsin Dells Area
Crawford Oil and Propane
Culvers, Portage
Domino’s, Portage
Farmers & Merchants Union Bank
J & J Fireball Lanes
Knuckleheads Trampoline Park & Ride

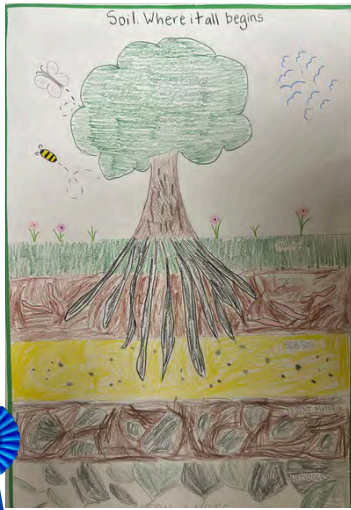
Land of Natura
Madison Mallards, Madison
McDonalds, Portage
Milwaukee Brewers
Milwaukee Public Museum
MooseJaw Pizza & Dells Brewing Co., WI Dells
Noah’s Ark Waterpark
Pizza Hut, Portage
Pizza Ranch, Portage
Poppy Waterman Ice Arena
Portage Theaters
Timbavati Wildlife Park, WI Dells
Wizzard Quest



Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Dept. • 112 E. Edgewater Street, Portage WI 53901
Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWI.Gov • (608) 742-9670

2026 COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER & SPEAKING CONTEST

PRIMARY DIVISION: KINDERGARTEN - 1ST GRADE



Jupyter Saucedo
Woodridge Primary School, Portage



Rhea Tenbruggencate
Woodridge Primary School, Portage



Harper Noyes
Rio Elementary School, Rio

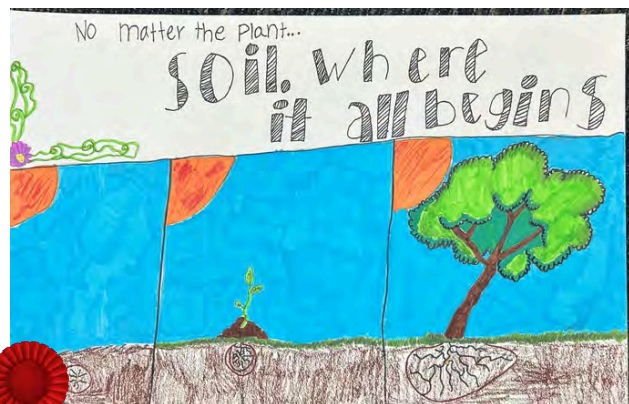


Honorary Mention
June Van den Adel
Homeschool, Lodi

ELEMENTARY DIVISION: 2ND - 3RD GRADE



Amelia Brown
Lodi Quisconsin School of Collaboration, Lodi



Scarlett Sween
John Muir Elementary, Portage

2026 COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER & SPEAKING CONTEST



Atlas Vehring
John Muir Elementary, Portage



Honorary Mention
Gage Olson
Ouisconsing School of Collaboration, Lodi

MIDDLE DIVISION: 4TH - 6TH GRADE



Jasmyn Karls
Ouisconsing School of Collaboration, Lodi



Ava Wittmann
Rio Middle/High School, Rio



Lilly Anderson
Ouisconsing School of Collaboration, Lodi



Honorary Mention
Ava Qualizza
Lodi Elementary School, Lodi

2026 COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARENESS POSTER & SPEAKING CONTEST

JUNIOR DIVISION: 7TH - 9TH GRADE



Layla Nickel
Pardeeville Middle School, Pardeeville



Mackenzie Howard
Rio Middle School, Rio



Maite Cuevas
Rio Middle School, Rio



Honorary Mention
Nadia Overland
Pardeeville Middle School, Pardeeville

CONSERVATION ACROSS COLUMBIA COUNTY

Columbia County Soil Health Field Day

*Harvey Miller Jr. Farm, Pardeeville**

On April 15th, 2026, Columbia County, in collaboration with Green Lake LWCD, DATCP, and UW-Extension, hosted a Spring Soil Health Field Day at the Harvey Miller Jr. farm for members of the Plain Faith Community. Attendees were encouraged to engage in discussions and demonstrations focused on soil health, including topics such as:

- Compaction
- Contour farming
- Cover crops
- Root development
- Water infiltration

Presentations covered various subjects, including:

- The nitrogen cycle
- Phosphorus precautions
- Manure management through composting systems
- Soil sampling, submission, and result interpretation
- An introduction to nutrient management planning

A heartfelt thank-you to Kevin Erb and Landon Baumgartner from UW-Extension, Randy Zogbaum and Wrangler Jones from DATCP, the Miller family, and the staff from the Columbia and Green Lake LWCDs for helping make this event so informative, engaging, and successful.



WI RIVER BASIN BASH @ CONSERVATION NIGHT BY THE LAKE



SCHOEPP FARMS

N2007 E Harmon Rd
Lodi, WI 53555

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, September 24, 2026

4:00PM - 8:00PM

RSVP By September 11th, 2026 to (608) 742-9670

Come and meet your farm neighbors while discovering how the farming community is dedicated to preserving our stunning lakes. Experience farm tours hosted by the Schoepp family, where they will highlight the conservation practices they have implemented on their family dairy farm. Additionally, enjoy a delightful dinner right on the farm. Farm tours will be available from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM with stations including DNR fish shocking, a soilpit, rainfall simulator and many others.



Funding for this was made possible, in part, by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The views expressed in written materials, publications, speakers, and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of DATCP; nor does any mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organization imply endorsement by the State of Wisconsin.

Systems for Soil Health & Drone Demo



Join Tyler Miller at Fifth Generation Farms in Lodi for an on-farm look at his cover crop practices. The event will also feature a guest presentation from Channel Seeds with a drone applicator demonstration, along with insights on soil health from DATCP conservation agronomist Wrangler Jones.



Thursday, June 18th



10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Lunch to follow



Fifth Generation Farms
N1484 O'Connor Road, Lodi

RSVP by Friday, June 12th
(608) 742-9670

Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWi.gov

Thank you sponsors:



Funding for this was made possible, in part, by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The views expressed in written materials, publications, speakers, and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of DATCP; nor does any mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organization imply endorsement by the State of Wisconsin

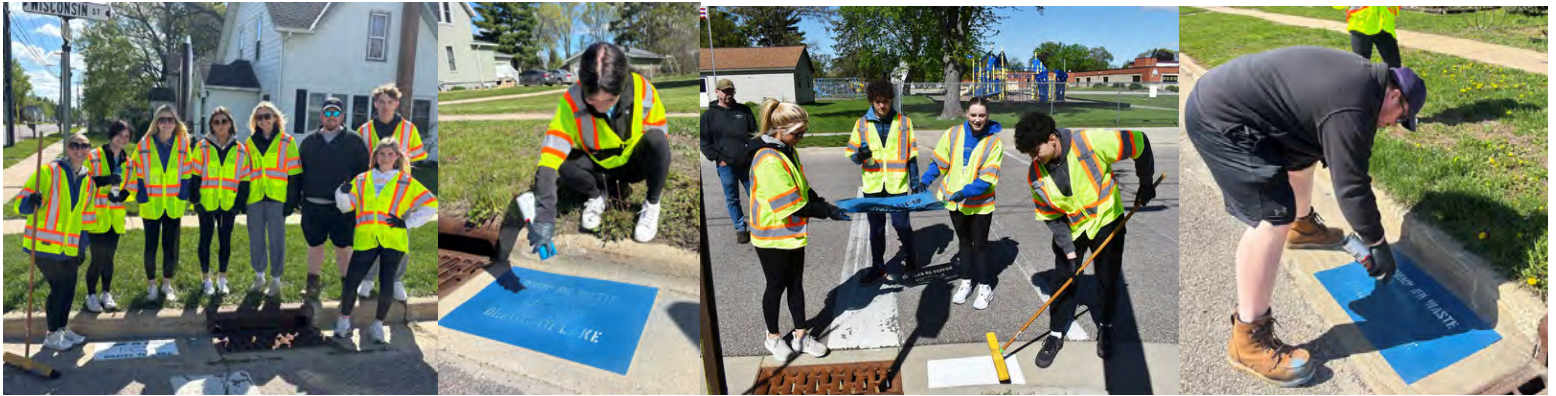
CONSERVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Stormwater Drain Stenciling with Students from Pardeeville High School

Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department was thrilled to collaborate with Pardeeville High School students for their Community Day on May 6, where they stenciled stormwater drains that flow directly into Park Lake and local wetlands.

During the event, we successfully marked over ****46 stormwater drains**** with the messages, "Dump No Waste Drains to Lake" and "Dump No Waste Drains to Wetland" along several streets including: **W Chestnut Street, E Chestnut Street (including a few side streets), Oak Street, Elm Street, Badger Street, E Lafollette Street and Sanborn Street**

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the **Pardeeville Lakes Management District** for their generous donation of paint and supplies for this project, as well as to the **Pardeeville Village** for their support and contribution of road paint.



Stormwater Drain Stenciling with Students from the Portage Science Club

On Wednesday, May 13, Columbia County Land and Water Conservation staff partnered with the Mrs. Thompson's Portage Science Club to stencil over ****42 stormwater drains**** in Portage that flow directly to local wetlands. Students helped mark drains with stencils that state "Dump No Waste Drains to Wetland" along **E. Collins Street, School Road, E. Slifer Street, Winnebago Avenue, Hiawatha Avenue, Yellowstone Street, Woodcrest Drive, Hamilton Street, and Evergreen Trail.**

After completing the stenciling project, students returned to the Land and Water Conservation Department for a Watershed Science presentation and an office tour.

A special thank-you goes to the City of Portage for donating paint and to the Highway Department for providing high-visibility vests.



Why Stencil Stormwater Drains?

Understanding where stormwater drains lead is important because stormwater drains don't go to a treatment plant—they flow directly into local lakes, rivers, and streams. That means anything dumped into a storm drain goes straight into the environment.

Here's why that matters:

- **Protects water quality:** Chemicals, paint, oil, trash, and yard waste can pollute lakes and harm fish, wildlife, and plants.
- **Prevents algae blooms:** Fertilizers and grass clippings add excess nutrients that can trigger algae growth.
- **Keeps drinking water safe:** Many communities rely on connected waterways for drinking water sources.
- **Protects wildlife:** Pollutants can poison aquatic animals or destroy their habitat.
- **Reduces cleanup costs:** Preventing pollution is far cheaper than restoring a damaged lake.

A simple phrase like “No Dumping—Drains to Lake” is a reminder that storm drains are directly connected to the natural water we all enjoy and depend on.

*Interested in stenciling stormwater drains in your neighborhood?
Give Columbia County LWCD a call at (608) 742-9670 to get involved!*



COLUMBIA
COUNTY

Planning and Zoning Department

608-742-9660
E-MAIL: planning.zoning@columbiacountywi.gov
WEBSITE: www.co.columbia.wi.us

112 E. Edgewater St.
Portage, WI 53901

PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATE

In March 2026, Columbia County approved updates to both the County's Comprehensive Plan and the Farmland Preservation Plan. The Farmland Preservation Plan must be re-certified through DATCP every 10 years and provides the framework for the protection of agricultural and open space land uses. The plan identifies preservation areas in the County and accommodates compatible growth. The County is required to have a certified plan and zoning ordinance in order to make Farmland Preservation tax credits available to qualifying landowners. This update focused on revising census statistics as well as identifying new development pressures facing farmland. The plan is certified through December 31, 2035. The County is now recertifying the existing zoning ordinance, which is due by the end of 2026.

Plans can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/planningzoning/Planning-Zoning/Comprehensive-Planning>

UPCOMING AGRICULTURAL EVENTS AROUND COLUMBIA COUNTY

SAUK COUNTY 2026 PASTURE WALKS

DATES/TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Photo by Six Sons Farm



2
MAY
9 - 11 AM

SIX SONS FARM (DALE GASSER AND JUDY FOSSEN) E7415 SPRING DRIVE, SAUK CITY WI

Bird Conservation and Rotational Grazing: Learn how grazing management can impact bird conservation. Explore and identify birds around the farm, look at spring pasture management, and discuss management decisions that promote grassland bird habitat.

24
JUNE
6 - 8 PM

ROLLING HILLS STOCK FARM (GENE SCHRIEFER) 2409 COUNTY ROAD Y, DODGEVILLE WI

Managing Native Warm Season Pasture: See how Gene's grazing management system has benefited from warm season grass pastures over the years. Compare establishment and management of these forages with more common introduced, cool-season grass pastures and what benefits they bring to a grazing system.

1
JULY
6 - 8 PM

PELTON CATTLE COMPANY (PELTON FAMILY) S2131 COUNTY RD H, REEDSBURG WI

Running a Stocker Enterprise: Learn how the Peltons have structured their stocker cattle enterprise and built a grazing management system to accommodate a larger herd size.

5
AUGUST
6 - 8 PM

TROWER FARM S4452 ROCKY POINT ROAD, BARABOO WI

Pasture Weed Management: Identify common pasture weeds and discuss the impacts these weeds can have on pasture, livestock productivity and what management strategies can keep them under control.

9
SEPTEMBER
5 - 7 PM

BULA'S PLEASANT VALLEY FARM (BULA FAMILY) S4473 SCENIC ROAD, BARABOO WI

Multi-Species Grazing Systems: Take a look at what approaches the Bula Farm has taken to manage multiple species and classes of livestock on the same operation. We'll discuss grass-finishing, infrastructure and the management required to stack multiple enterprises on the same pasture.

7
OCTOBER
5 - 7 PM

HUTTER FARM E3505 EAST HARRIS RD, LA VALLE

Custom Grazing Cattle: Want to explore how you can start grazing without owning any cattle? Join us at the Hutter farm to see how custom grazing and which management strategies have worked for their operation.




Columbia County

MOO-DAY BRUNCH

Saturday, June 20th, 2026
9:00am - 1:00pm



Visit: Columbia County Dairy Promotion Group on [Facebook](#) for more information.



COLUMBIA COUNTY FAIR
Portage, WI
Since 1851
★ 175th ANNIVERSARY ★
1851 - 2026

VENDOR SPACES
Still Available!
RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

LIVESTOCK SPONSORS
Still Needed!
ESPECIALLY IN THE SMALL ANIMAL DEPARTMENTS!

CARNIVAL TICKETS
Available at a Discount
★ ON OUR WEBSITE! ★

GRANDSTAND TICKETS
Available on Our Website!

THE FAIR IS

Almost Here!

★ MARK YOUR CALENDARS! ★

IMPORTANT DATES

-  **JULY 29 - AUGUST 2, 2026**
Columbia County Fair

-  **JUNE 20, 2026**
Fair Entry Deadline

-  **JULY 25, 2026**
Fairgrounds Clean Up Day

-  **JULY 28, 2026**
Fair Entry Day

Don't miss a minute of the fun!

 **ONLINE TICKET SALES END**
at 8:00AM on
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2026

VISIT COLUMBIACOUNTYFAIRWI.ORG TODAY!

COLUMBIA COUNTY LAND & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT



Office Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



(608) 742-9670



112 E. Edgewater St. Portage, WI 53901



Land.Conservation@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

Kurt Calkins - Director of Land Resources

Todd Rietmann - Conservation Planning & Engineering

Todd.Rietmann@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

Timothy O'Leary - Practice Engineering Emphasis

Timothy.OLeary@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

Christopher Arnold - Water Resources/GIS Emphasis

Christopher.Arnold@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

Anastasia Wallner - Land & Water Resource Management Technician

Anastasia.Wallner@ColumbiaCountyWI.gov

Vacant Position - Agricultural Outreach Specialist

Kelly Maginnis - Office Coordinator & Tree Program Consultant

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Briana Enger - Administrative Assistant

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