



SPRING 2025

# FIELDS & SHORES

Official Newsletter of the Green Lake County Land  
Conservation Department

## Arbor Day Fast Facts

- Arbor Day originated in Nebraska in 1872
- National Arbor Day lands on the last Friday in April every year
- On the first Arbor Day, almost 1 million trees were planted!
- Arbor Day became a national holiday in 1970

## No-till Drill Rental

The LCD has a Great Plains Model 1006NT 10' drill available to rent for the purposes of no-till seeding, planting cover crops, pasture renovation, and more!

There is a \$50 flat fee for a 2-day rental, with an additional \$8 per acre planted.

For more information, call (920)-294-4051



## Save the Date! Arbor Day Breakfast



**Friday, May 2nd, 2025 from 8AM to 10:30 AM**

This year is the 42nd Annual Arbor Day Celebration hosted by the Green Lake County Land, Water, Parks, and Community Committee. During this celebration, there will be a buffet style breakfast, guest speakers, door prizes, and everyone registered will go home with a red maple tree seedling. The topic of interest this year is targeted grazing as a tool for invasive species control.

This event is taking place at the Green Lake County Conference Center, located at W2511 State Road 23 in Green Lake. The cost is \$20 per person, and registration is required. Please call to sign up before April 18th. We hope to see you there!

## Coming Up: Farmland Preservation Spot Checks

If you participate in the Farmland Preservation Program, your land may be up for a spot check this coming spring!

FPP compliance checks are done every four years in our county. During these checks, we will be looking for a completed nutrient management plan, possible erosion concerns, pastures and fields meet tolerable soil loss, manure storage facilities have no visible signs of leaks or failure, and more. If all are in compliance, the farm will be able to apply for credits during tax season.

If you are curious about joining the Farmland Preservation Program, please check out our website, email our general inbox, or give us a call!

## Well-Screening and Cost Share for Well Abandonment

Landowners who own private wells are advised by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to test their water for nitrates and bacteria once a year, and to test for arsenic and lead every five years. The LCD offers well screenings for nitrates to citizens in the county year-round. Health and Human Services also offers free well-tests to homes that have children under 12 years old, or homes of pregnant women. Additional information can be found on the county website.

The LCD also offers cost sharing to close old and abandoned wells. If you have a well on your property that is no longer in use and are interested in officially closing it, please contact the office by call or email.

## Plant Sale Updates

Our native plant sale ended on March 15th, 2025, but if you missed it, you're in luck! We are extending our plant sale through May 1st, 2025. Once this day passes, all people who ordered will receive an email updating them on the pick-up date and time.

If you haven't had the chance to order, please visit our website!

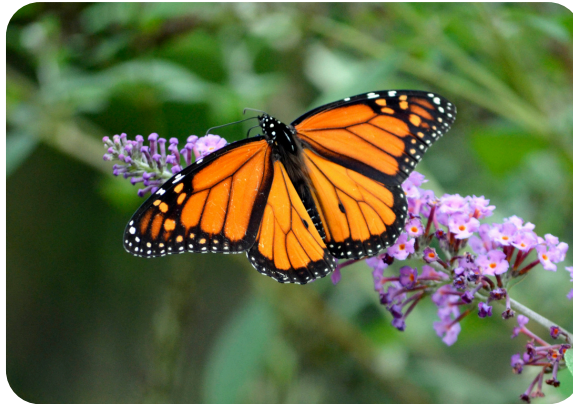
<https://greenlakecountynativeplantsale.square.site/>



## Raingarden Building Workshop

At the end of February, we hosted a rain and pollinator garden workshop to promote our native plant sale at the Caestecker Library in Green Lake.

During this workshop, we learned all about the planning that goes into building a raingarden, the benefits of having one, and the plants that should be included.



We hope to host more education-based workshops, so be on the lookout for more! If you couldn't make it, please visit our website for some additional information.

## Average soil loss has decreased across the county!

Since 1999, the Land Conservation team has done an annual transect survey each June to gather information used to estimate average soil loss throughout the county. This is done roadside, through the windshield of our vehicle.

For this survey, we revisit the same 387 points each year. These points cover all 10 townships, and range in topography and soil type to accurately display what we have all over the county. From these points, data is collected and recorded into SnapPlus, a program a lot of you may be familiar with. Soil type, slope steepness and length, current year's crop, percentage of residue present, tillage method, cover crop usage, and erosion concerns are all recorded to help estimate the average soil loss.

In 2024, the average soil loss for the county was estimated at 1.45 tons per acre. This number came from using the revised universal soil loss equation, also known as RUSLE2. In 1999, the average soil loss was estimated at 2.8 tons per acre. With the implementation of on farm conservation practices, we have seen a significant decrease in average soil loss!

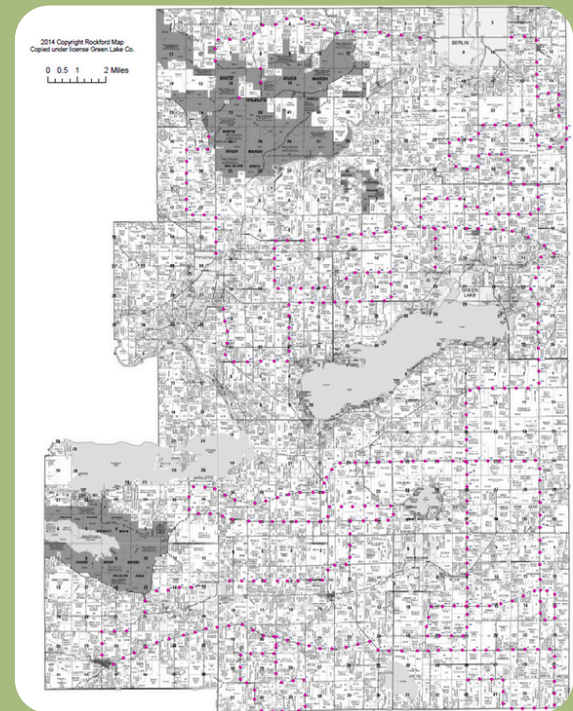
We hope that in the future, we will see this number continue to decrease. The more we talk and learn, the more topsoil we can save from ending up in our waterways.

## Create a Pollinator Pit Stop!

Pollinator populations have been on the decline, which can cause major problems to our food system. It is estimated that about one in every three bites of food you eat is due to the activity of pollinators.

The reason populations are declining is because there aren't nearly enough pollinator friendly plants within flight range to support them. By planting a pollinator garden, you are supplying quality food -- not only for them, but also us!

Think of a pollinator garden as a rest stop for our insect, bird, and bat friends. Here, they can fill up on fuel (seeds, nectar, or pollen) and take a nap. A lot of bee species will overwinter in the dead vegetation as well.



Map of the Transect survey data points visited each year

## Why should we care about topsoil?

- 95% of the world's food is grown in the top soil
- topsoil cannot be easily replaced
- it can take anywhere from 100 to 500 years to make 1 inch of topsoil, making this an invaluable resource
- topsoil is filled with nitrogen and phosphorus and when introduced to our lakes and streams, it can have an undesirable effect



# Upcoming Projects and Construction

There are a lot of upcoming projects that will be installed in the next few months. Some of these projects include shoreline restoration, farmable terraces, grassed waterways, and buffer strips along intermittent or perennial streams. All of these practices are implemented to help decrease soil erosion and prevent nutrients from urban and agricultural runoff from making their way to our water.

A very common practice implemented all across Wisconsin is the grassed waterway. Grassed waterways are exactly what they sound – a flat channel with gradual side slopes, which is then seeded with native grasses. The grass and flat bottom allow surface water to move at a lower, less erosive speed. This prevents stormwater from creating gully erosion and depositing topsoil into our waterways.

You may see these practices all over the county without realizing their purpose! Without practices like this being added, our lakes and streams would experience larger algae blooms and a decrease in aquatic ecosystem health.



Photo of Big Green Lake's algae blooms in the summer due to nutrient runoff



Finished grassed waterway in a cornfield

## Poster Contest First Place Winners

The National Poster Contest theme this year was Home is Where the Habitat is. Students around the county submitted their own interpretations of what habitats mean to them. Each poster must say “Home is where the habitat is” and only have one artist. These students worked really hard on their posters, and it paid off!

105 posters were sent to our office from grades kindergarten to twelfth grade. There are 6 different age groups and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places were chosen from each group. All 1st place winners received a \$25 check, and their poster was sent to the Lake Winnebago Land and Water Conservation Area Association to be judged with 1st place winners from 8 other counties.

One of our students received 1st place at the area meeting in Oshkosh and was sent to the annual State Conference in Green Bay at the beginning of March. Here, this poster was up against posters from all across the state. Elizabeth Bornick placed 2nd overall at our state conference in the senior division. She won a wooden art box with different art media. Congratulations, Elizabeth!

## County Wide 1st Place Winners

10-12th Grade: Elizabeth Bornick



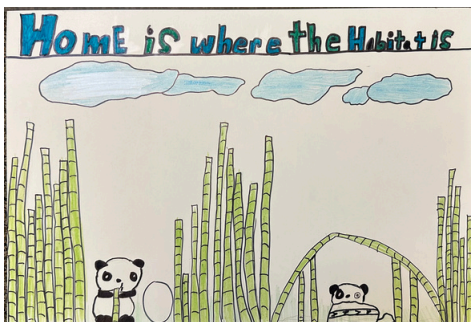
K-1 Grade: Vivian Stephenson



2-3rd Grade: Kenzyn Moon



Special Needs Division: Orion Peet



4-6th Grade: Brinkley Moon



7-9th Grade: Kieran Melchor



## Continuing Education for the LCD Staff

At the beginning of March, three of our staff got the opportunity to attend the Wisconsin Land and Water annual conference. WI Land and Water is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting county employees and committee members by empowering locally led conservation initiatives.

During this event, we got to network with other Land and Water Conservation Department employees and committee members from counties across Wisconsin, as well as employees from NRCS, WDNR, and WI Land and Water. We discussed current projects, shared ideas, troubles, and solutions with one another. It really is such a wonderful opportunity to come together and learn with and from one another.

The knowledge we gain from this conference really aides in the work we do for the citizens of the county. Thank you to Wisconsin Land and Water for pulling all of this information together and creating such a welcoming atmosphere!

For more information on the organization, please visit: [wisconsinlandwater.org](http://wisconsinlandwater.org).

## Thank you for your Support!

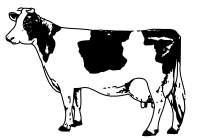
One of the main goals with our newsletter is to educate people about what the department does! With this addition, we hope to reach people we don't get the opportunity to work with, as well as keep those we do in the loop.

We appreciate everyone who has signed up to receive our quarterly newsletter and those who have liked and followed us on Facebook! Please share this newsletter with your family members and friends, as we would like to continue to inform others about the work of the Green Lake County Land Conservation Department.

Sincerely,

Olivia Fischer, Soil Conservationist I

# THANK YOU!



Sign up to keep receiving this newsletter!



[www.greenlakecountywi.gov/connect-with-us/](http://www.greenlakecountywi.gov/connect-with-us/)



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Look up: Green Lake County  
Land Conservation Department  
or copy and paste this site:  
<https://www.facebook.com/GreenLakeCountyLCD>

Visit our website



<https://www.greenlakecountywi.gov/departments/land-conservation/>

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