

# Greener Acres



SUMMER EDITION

JUNE 2010

## Sheboygan County Land and Water Conservation Department

### 2009 - 2010 Annual Tree and Shrub Sale

By Eric Fehlhaber

This past April the Land and Water Conservation Department completed its Annual 2009 - 2010 Tree and Shrub Sale. This highly popular and successful program has been a department fixture since 1997. The number of trees ordered dropped slightly to around

70,000. However, the number of people placing orders rose to 620.

Organizing a sale of this size is beyond our departments resources so we are dependent on the cooperation and help from outside sources. I'd like to acknowledge this help and extend our appreciation to those whose assistance we count on. Special thanks to the employees of the Sheboygan ADRC building for making special parking arrangements, to Jim Fasse of Fasse Paints for the use of his parking lot and to Morrelle Transfer for the use of their wood pallets.

We also got Federal USDA volunteer assistance from District Conservationist Mike Patin and Technician Dave Brown of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



Handing out orders we get help from Jenny Rortvedt and Lisa Goedeke of Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Last but not least we have those doing the heavy work - sorting, filling and hauling all those 620 orders. Thanks to Jason Knuth, Kurt Fehlhaber, Former District Conservationist Dexter Porter, Jack Pilarski, Planning, Resource, Agricultural and Extension (PRAE) committee member Mike Rammer, and Geoff Schramm.

Order forms for the 2010 - 2011 spring sale will be available in late October. Program orders are accepted through

March 1, 2011. Tree shelter tubes, planting aids, rain barrels, and composters are available for sale throughout the year depending on what's left in stock. To obtain an order form or to be placed on our mailing list please call the Land and Water Conservation Department office at (920) 459-1370.

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**"The great thing about getting older** is that you don't lose all the other ages you've been."

-Madeleine L'Engle

**"How can there be so much difference** between a day off and an off day?"

- Unknown

**"Reality is the leading cause of stress** - for those in touch with it."

- Jane Wagner

**"Don't overlook life's small joys** while searching for the big ones."

- Unknown

#### Looking Ahead

*July 5, 2010* - LWCD office closed for July 4th holiday

*July 15, 2010* - Committee Meeting

*August 19, 2010* - Committee Meeting

*September 2 - 7, 2010* - Sheboygan County Fair

*September 5, 2010* - LWCD office closed for Labor Day

*September 16, 2010* - Committee Meeting

*September 23, 2010* - First day of Fall

*October 2010* - Tree Program Order forms available

*October 21, 2010* - Committee Meeting

## FPP Gives Way to the Working Lands Initiative

By Christopher Ertman

The State of Wisconsin will be replacing the \$27 million Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) with the Working Lands Initiative (WLI) starting with the 2010 tax year (paid in 2011). The changes included in the WLI should make more landowners eligible to claim credit on their income tax return.

Additionally, many who have been claiming a credit should receive a larger credit. I have outlined a few of the changes that make this possible below:

- Removal of the income cap for those wanting to claim the credit
- Removal of the 35 acre minimum land owning provision
- Providing for a flat per acre rate of tax credit based on zoning. In Sheboygan County all of the townships except Sheboygan have farmland preservation zoning. The per acre credit for the rest of the county is \$7.50/acre

Some additional eligibility requirements remaining the same with the WLI are:

- A claimant must have \$6,000 in gross farm revenue in the past year or total \$18,000 in the past three years. If you rent out your land the value of the crop grown on your land would count toward the gross farm revenue.
- Property taxes must be paid by the claimant
- Claimants must certify on their tax form that they are in compliance with state soil and water conservation standards.

In regards to claiming the tax credit and how soon a claimant needs to comply with the state soil and water

conservation standards there are two categories: *continuous participants* and *new participants*. *Continuous participants* are those landowners who claimed the FPP tax credit for the 2009 tax year (claimed in 2010). Everyone else is considered a new participant for tax purposes. If a *continuous participant* is currently in compliance with all components of the state's soil and water conservation standards they may continue to claim the tax credit. If a *continuous participant* is not currently in compliance with all of the state soil and water conservation standards he/she must agree to and sign a compliance schedule developed by the Land and Water Conservation Department. *Continuous participants* can have up to five years, no later than December 31, 2015 to come into compliance.

*New participants* need to be in compliance with all components of the state soil and water conservation standards before they can take the tax credit and no schedule of compliance is allowed.

At the Land and Water Conservation Department we have been updating our records to find out who is in compliance with the state soil and water conservation standards. We have made two mailings to past FPP participants so far this year and will be doing at least two more mailings to help us in our compliance determinations. If you are a past participant you should be getting a mailing by September. If you are a new participant or would just like more information regarding the WLI, you can call/email Christopher Ertman at (920) 459-1375 - email at [www.ertmacte@co.sheboygan.wi.us](mailto:www.ertmacte@co.sheboygan.wi.us). Also a good resource for WLI information is the Department of Ag Trade and Consumer Protection website at [www.datcp.state.wi.us/workinglands](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/workinglands).

## DeMaster's Retire

By Eric Fehlhaber

After 70+ years of combined service to Sheboygan County Mike and Terri DeMaster of the Planning and Resources Department have decided to retire effective June 4th, 2010.



Many of you in the rural community may have had contact with one or both of them over the years regarding zoning issues, sanitary permits, rural addresses, FPP certificates, boat landings, snowmobile trails and Broughton Marsh Park management. This duty list is far from inclusive but I think you get the idea. They are going to be missed. Mike and Terri have served the residents of this county over these many years with an amazing level of dedication and professionalism. For those of you who have come to know Mike and Terri you realize that they are deeply faithful, caring individuals whose efforts to make Sheboygan County a better place to live extended far beyond their employment with the county. Always active in church and community organizations over the years I suspect this will continue and even grow as they enter retirement. We wish them well.



**Special Funds Announced for Farmers in Lake Michigan Watersheds** By Mike Patin, NRCS

**F**armers in the Lower Fox and the

Manitowoc/Sheboygan River watershed may be eligible for a special conservation initiative to help clean up the Great Lakes. Wisconsin is one of eight states that have received federal

funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service announced that Wisconsin will receive \$2.2 million for agricultural conservation practices to reduce erosion and protect water quality through this initiative.

NRCS will conduct a special sign-up through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding from June 1 to July 1, 2010. Over \$1.6 million is available to help farmers with the cost of needed conservation practices, with particular emphasis on livestock concerns. Priority watershed are those with the most vulnerability and greatest need for protection of water quality.

NRCS will be offering cost-sharing on a wide variety of practices geared towards assisting producers in addressing soil and water quality improvements on their operations. Producers may progressively address these issues with practices such as; **Manure Storage, Grassed Waterways, Roof Runoff Structures, Silage Leachate, Milkhouse and Barnyard Runoff Collection Systems, Tree Plant-**

**ing, Cover Crops, and the development or expansion of a Managed Grazing system and practices associated with it.**

Also available is cost-sharing for **Nutrient Management** for Livestock and Cash Grain producers. With the dramatic rise in fertilizer prices, increasing regulations, and the new Wisconsin Working Lands Tax Credit Program. It's more important than ever to develop a nutrient management plan that identifies proper timing, amount, and

nutrient crediting to help offset these costs. Cost-sharing for the development of a **Nutrient Management Plan** is quite significant at \$9.60/ac/yr for 3 years, and will help you to comply with the ever increasing manure application regulations.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is available for producers to apply for cost-sharing on a continuous basis, and producers are encouraged to contact the NRCS office at the USDA Service Center at (920) 467-9917 extension 3 to schedule an appointment to discuss the program in detail. More information is available at [www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov).

**Sucker Creek - Targeted for Water Quality Improvement Wisconsin Coastal Management Program Awards Grant** By Patrick Miles

**S**ucker Creek, an 8.6 mile stream which empties into Lake Michigan about a mile north of the

City of Port Washington will soon be the focus of water quality improvement efforts by Ozaukee and Sheboygan County Land and Water Departments along with many partners belonging to the Sheboygan River Basin Partnership.

The Wisconsin Coastal Management Program has awarded a Nonpoint Source Pollution Control grant to the Ozaukee County Land and Water Management Department that provides an opportunity to conduct water quality testing and monitoring of the creek, tributaries and outfalls to identify pollutant loading areas and planned improvements.

In Sheboygan County, Sucker Creek is located in the far southeast corner of the Town of Holland, southeast of the Village of Cedar Grove, adjacent to Lake Michigan.

The overall water quality of Sucker Creek is fair to poor per the *State of the Sheboygan River Basin Report, October 2001*. Nonpoint source pollution remains a significant concern and threatens the water quality of Sucker Creek.

A pollution prevention plan will be developed that will identify pollutant loading areas and planned improvements. The pollution prevention plan will be used to target funds for the installation of best management practices to improve water quality.

A "Friends of Sucker Creek Partnership" will be formed and engage local citizens in the work to foster long-term grassroots attention to this watershed to improve water quality. If you have an interest in becoming involved please contact Andy Holschbach in Ozaukee County at (262) 284-8271, or Pat Miles in Sheboygan County at (920) 459-1370.



## Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's)

By David Clappes

Over the past decade, Wisconsin has become home to an increasing number of large livestock operations, also known as Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations or CAFO's. These large operations must apply for and receive state water



**Excavated Liquid Storage at Drake Dairy, Inc. Ready for Concrete Liner 2008**

protection permits, also known as WPDES, which is a Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, to operate. These larger farms must submit to the DNR detailed information about the operation, a manure management plan, plans and specifications for all manure storage facilities, and a completed environmental analysis questionnaire. They also must undergo an environmental assessment and a public review. These WPDES permits are aimed at ensuring these farms use proper planning, construction, and manure management to protect Wisconsin waters. The permit requirements are found in Chapter NR 243 of the state administrative code and covers only water protection. NR 243 does not address air, odor, traffic, lighting, land use, or other social concerns people have about large farms.

Every farm is responsible for properly managing its manure and other nutrients it applies to the land to prevent polluting lakes, rivers, wetlands, and groundwater. In addition, the larger farms (CAFO's) are required by the state to meet certain safe-

guards to protect Wisconsin waters including:

- Follow approved facility construction plans.
- Develop and

implement a plan for when, where, and how much manure and other nutrients to spread.

- Have a minimum of six months storage for liquid manure.
- Not spread liquid manure during frozen/snow-covered conditions.
- Not spread liquid or solid manure during February or March.
- Collect detailed land spreading and



**Steel Placement/Tying Prior to Pouring Concrete Liner at Drake Dairy, Inc. 2008**

inspection records.

- Control feedlot runoff to a zero discharge standard.

Sheboygan County is no exception to the increasing number of larger farms in Wisconsin. To date, the county has five large farms (CAFO's) with a WPDES permit in hand and five others in the application phase. The five farms with an issued permit include: Vorpahl Farms, Inc. (Town of Sherman), Quonset Farms, LLP (Town of Lima), Drake Dairy, Inc., (Town of Russell), Highland Crossing Dairy, LLC (Town of Herman), and

Hanke Farms, Inc. (Town of Plymouth). The five farms in the application phase are located in the town of Mitchell, Russell, Lima, and Greenbush (2).

Fast Facts:

- Farms with 1,000 animals units need a water protection (WPDES) permit.
- One animal unit = 1,000 lb. animal.
- One milk cow weighs an average 1,400 lbs.
- One milk cow = 1.4 animal units.
- Waste generated by one milk cow has as much pollution potential as 18 people.
- Wisconsin has 188 permitted farms.
- Most permitted farms are dairy farms.



**Last Concrete Pour of Liquid Storage Facility at Drake Dairy, Inc. 2008**

## New Addressing Ordinance

By Steve Steinhardt, Emergency Management & Brett Zemba, Planning GIS Specialist

Starting soon, expect to see a new type of rural address sign in and around Sheboygan County. The Sheboygan County Board passed an ordinance repealing and re-creating Chapter 36, Uniform Rural Numbering System on April 13th, 2010. This ordinance will not change your address but does detail how an address should be posted and on what kind of sign.

In the past, Sheboygan County had utilized a white tile, with black lettering/numbering, as the official sign for rural addresses. Many of these tile signs have deteriorated and faded over time, have broken, were installed in a

bad location, or just were never installed to begin with. These signs are very hard to read as your driving down the road and are virtually impossible to read at night.

The new signs are a “flag-style” sign, are reflective and are printed on both sides, and are installed perpendicular to the road. The ordinance has specifications that include having the road name on top in letters not to exceed 1.5” and the address below in letters not less than 3”. Driveways longer than 500’ need to include the driveway length on the sign as it is important information for fire departments. Towns do have to pick a uniform

color for their Town, the size of the sign, and may include additional information such as the Town name.

Driving around Wisconsin you have probably already observed this type of sign posting an address. The Town of Russell has already installed this new style of sign throughout the town and some individuals in the Town of Scott have made the change. All of Fond du Lac County has made the switch.

Towns in Sheboygan County have until 2015 to switch to the new style of sign but most are not waiting as they see a need to make the change.

The loudest advocate for the change

has been the emergency responders serving residents in Sheboygan County. Fire Departments, First Responders, EMS agencies, and Law Enforcement all see an obvious

advantage for quickly finding an address. Not only were there documented incidents when due to poor addressing, people in need of medical attention could not be easily found, but we also had responders in auto accidents because they were searching for an address. Contractors and other service providers have also been lobbying for a change as they see the problem finding an address on a daily basis.

This change in addressing is a low-tech solution to what many view as a signifi-

cant problem. The cost will most likely be borne by the property owner, but that is up to each individual Town. In most cases the cost for a new installed sign will be around \$35.00.

If you have any questions about the new signage please feel free to contact Steve Steinhardt, Sheboygan County Emergency Management, or Brett Zemba, Sheboygan County Planning Specialist.



Hello again! My name is Jared Grunewald and I am the summer intern for the Land and Water Conservation Department. I held the same position as last summer, and I am very fortunate and excited to be here again.

I live near Ada with my parents, Mary and Gary, and my older brother Joshua. I am currently a junior at UW Milwaukee where I am majoring in Civil Engineering, with an emphasis in Environmental and Water Resources Engineering.

In my free time I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, kayaking and playing tennis. I have also been a member of the Ada Fire Department for nearly three years. It feels great to be back and I am looking forward to working with everyone again!

## Sheboygan County Land and Water Conservation Department

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**MISSION: Provide sound technical and educational assistance in the management, protection, and enhancement of soil and water resources to land users in Sheboygan County.**

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## Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Plan Update

By Patrick Miles

The Sheboygan County EAB Workgroup has been meeting during the first half of 2010 to create the Sheboygan County Community EAB Resource Management Plan. The EAB workgroup consists of representatives from county, city, village and town levels. Currently, the plan is expected to be available as a final draft at the end of June 2010. The draft will go to the Sheboygan County Planning, Resources, Agriculture, and Extension Committee for review in July. In August the committee will consider approving the plan with any revisions and introduce a resolution for adoption by the county board in September.

The EAB workgroup guided the de-

velopment of the plan to be a tool that will aid local communities and residents in planning for the arrival of EAB. It is not a mandate, but is intended to provide information that will help prepare communities in implementing specific action plans that provide appropriate and effective response in managing EAB.

This plan consolidates essential information within one reference document and is intended to assist Sheboygan County communities with planning for EAB. It covers the his-



tory of EAB in North America and how to identify both the EAB and an ash tree. The plan covers the most up to date techniques for EAB preparation, detection, and control along with potential wood utilization options for ash trees. The plan provides information on the steps that are taken once EAB is confirmed in the county and summarizes the regulations that Sheboygan County is currently under. There is information on outreach, education, and opportunities for funding. In addition, the results of the 2009 tree inventory and the 2010 municipal survey are summarized.