

Dane County

# Land & Water Resources Department

**This report documents another year of magnificent achievements in conservation by Dane County's Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD).** The individual projects are great – trails completed, polluted runoff reduced, wetlands and prairies restored. But more important is our progress in improving our lands and waters in Dane County. We are not content to try to preserve what we have; we must and are continuing to restore and improve our natural resources. Thanks to stream restoration, some of our trout streams have their best population in decades. The Waunakee manure digester is on track with the result that we'll reduce the algae-producing phosphorus entering our lakes. Acres of new prairies restore plants and animals that were rare or endangered.

We owe great thanks to LWRD's staff and volunteers for the hard work and passion at the heart of these restorations. But the greatest thanks are due to our citizens who so prize our natural resources.

*Kathleen Falk—Dane County Executive*



## 2009 Annual Report

## From the Director

Welcome to our 4<sup>th</sup> Land and Water Resources Annual report. As is our custom for this report, we want to share the accomplishments the department has made to protect and restore our natural resources, and to promote sustainable and environmentally responsible enjoyment of these resources with our customers, service recipients and the residents of Dane County.

The economic downturn has been a challenge for us as a Department as it has been for county residents who have needed to do more with fewer resources. The next strategic issue that our Department will be addressing in the coming year will help us best pursue our mission in a fiscally constrained environment. We'll start with a focus on expanding our already vibrant partnerships with (especially Parks) volunteers, to additional projects for volunteers in all divisions.

It is only through the professionalism and dedication of the department's staff that we are able to: restore the

water quality of Stewart Lake; provide opportunities for over 1 million people to enjoy our parks and natural resource areas for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row; make available for future generations critical lands for their recreational use and environmental protection; develop and implement action plans that minimize the spread of invasive species for both our aquatic and timber resources; engage tens of thousands of hours of volunteer time for the benefit of current and future generations to enjoy our natural resources; and delivery of both planning assistance and technical service to our agricultural and urban interests.

On behalf of everyone in the Land and Water Resources Department, I hope you enjoy this report and find it informative. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 608-224-3731, or email [connors.kevin@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:connors.kevin@co.dane.wi.us).

- **Kevin Connors, Director**

## Shoreland & Riparian Management Report Submitted to DNR

The Dane County Water Body Classification Project's Shoreland and Riparian Management Report, prepared by Dane County staff with oversight from the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission, was submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at the end of December 2009 to satisfy the grant that funded the project.

The report does not commit Dane County to any one course of action, but rather includes a set of policy options to better protect our surface waters from near-shore impacts. The report and

supporting materials are all available at [www.danewaters.com](http://www.danewaters.com).



**Lake Waubesa Shoreline**

The Lakes and Watershed Commission will gather information from shoreland restoration demonstration projects before it recommends any program or ordinance changes. The Commission will also coordinate action on the report's policy options with changes to statewide runoff management (NR 151) and shoreland zoning (NR 115) rules.

## Lewis-Lunney Account Keeps Park Projects Moving Forward

The Lewis-Lunney Account is named in honor of two longtime Dane County Park Commission members, Elizabeth (Libby) Lewis and William (Bill) Lunney. Libby Lewis served on the Park Commission for 25 years (1981-2007) and Bill Lunney, the Commission's current Chair, has served since 1987.

Project highlights for 2009 include:

- Completion of the CamRock Bike/Pedestrian Trail—a two-mile limestone trail linking the Villages of Cambridge and Rockdale.

- Lower Yahara River Trail—Phase I Planning
- Token Creek Park and Natural Resource Area Master Plan Development initiated.
- McCarthy Group Camp Development
- Scheidegger Forest Public Access Development

## *The County's First Park Gets an Extreme Makeover*

After three years of planning, Stewart Lake was dredged in the fall of 2009. More than 18,500 cubic yards of sediment was removed from the lake bed as part of the overall effort to improve the lake's water quality and enhance recreational opportunities for our visitors. Even with a long and storied history dating back to the early 1900's, the former "Lake Park" experienced a decline over the last 50 years in water quality and recreational value. The County's first park is now well on its way to providing our guests with an improved lake and recreational experience that can be enjoyed this year.

The dredging operation began in September and lasted through October. The task involved hydraulic dredging, which in essence is "vacuuming" the material from the bottom of the lake. The slurry of material was then pumped onto existing park property to the east of the lake where the material settled into three large detention basins. The remaining "clean" water was returned to the lake through a series of pipes. By removing the sediment, the nutrients associated with those sediments were also removed. Without excessive nutrients, the end result will be a decrease in aquatic plant growth and better water quality. The dredging also created greater depth and should improve water flow through the lake.

Efforts in 2010 will include the completion of a swimming and beach area on the southern end of the lake. The fishery of the lake will consist of largemouth bass and bluegill. Plans call for stocking the lake with forage fish this spring followed by a fall stocking of

game fish. Future years will hopefully see an annual stocking of rainbow trout once the forage fishery has a chance to sustain itself. Through a partnership with the Mt. Horeb High School, fish cribs are being built and will be placed into the lake in the spring to provide additional habitat for the fishery.

Additionally, LWRD staff are working with private partners to identify and fund many more park amenities including trails, a handicap accessible fishing pier, restroom renovations, and a new shelter.



***Hydraulic Dredging of Stewart Lake***

## *Community Manure Handling Facility Closer to Breaking Ground*

The County Executive provided \$1,370,000 in the LWRD 2009 Capital Budget for initiating a Community Manure Facility Project. These funds were to be the seed money to get a facility constructed and operating. In April of 2009, Governor Doyle recommended \$6.6 million for the construction of two digesters. The state contribution towards these projects is for necessary equipment and related costs to improve water quality in the Lake Mendota Watershed.

Dane County Public Works Department received six responses for the Request for Proposal. Following extensive review and interviews, Clear Horizons, LLC was selected to work with farmers in the Waunakee Cluster. Clear Horizons has arranged for financing through SCC Americas.

Pending final design, permit approval and acceptance by the participating farmers, it is anticipated that construction will begin spring of 2010 with the facility in operation the end of 2010.



***Manure digester on the Crave Brothers Farm***

## Yahara Watershed Comes CLEAN

In 2009 the Yahara Lakes Legacy Partnership (YLLP) made significant progress toward developing and implementing a long-term community-wide visionary plan for improving the quality of the Yahara chain of lakes. The Office of Lakes and Watersheds coordinates Dane County's responsibilities under the partnership and the Yahara CLEAN Memorandum of Understanding among Dane County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the City of Madison.

Our communication and outreach actions in 2009 included completing a communications plan, engaging with area residents at several expos and events, keeping MOU signatories and grant funders up-to-date, and presenting ideas for a long-term partnership structure (later approved by the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission) at the UW's Community Environmental Forum. OLW hosted the partnership's website since the early days, but in 2009 that site migrated to [www.yaharawatershed.org](http://www.yaharawatershed.org).

Moving toward CLEAN's final report and recommendations, we coordinated and completed several efforts: a list of past studies, plans and recommendations about Yahara lakes; a watershed-wide (SWAT) model of every watershed draining to Yahara lakes, a UW-Madison grad student's field-specific (SNAP Plus) modeling analysis in agricultural land in the Pheasant Branch watershed, and UW's Water Resources Management Students' Door Creek Study. We also worked with UW Center for Limnology colleagues who are developing a

model that will predict lake response to recommended practices to control sediment and nutrient runoff. Our beaches technical advisory team created plans to reduce beach bacteria from geese and from stormwater at pilot beaches on lakes Wingra and Monona.

From the watershed-wide modeling we've documented that phosphorus runoff to the lakes is extremely variable across the watershed, and is dependent on soils, manure application, and tillage practices. The highest phosphorus loadings are to Lake Mendota, but there are also substantial loadings to Waubesa and Kegonsa.

At year's end we were squarely focused on developing a detailed recommended plan to reduce nutrient and sediment loading and beach bacteria. The plan will include implementation steps that spell out how and when each action will be taken, who is responsible, how it can be funded, and what environmental results can be expected. Our deadline for completing a final report and recommendations is now June 30, 2010.



*Early morning on Lake Monona*

## Reducing Phosphorus in Pleasant Valley & Mendota Watersheds

### *Pleasant Valley Watershed Pilot Project*

The Wisconsin Buffer Initiative (WBI) looks at the Phosphorus Index (PI), expressed as pounds/acre/year, leaving fields and entering surface water. The goal is to have farms with the highest PIs to apply additional conservation practices.

This approach is being applied to the Pleasant Valley watershed located in southwest Dane County. The control watershed is the Smith Conley Creek, Ridgeway Branch located a few miles west in southeast Iowa County. About 95 percent of the Pleasant Valley watershed and about 75 percent of Smith Conley watershed have been inventoried.

Based upon inventories and soil testing in the watershed, it is estimated that 12% of the total cropland acres with a PI value above 6.0 produce 60% of the total phosphorus load. Conversely, 65% of the cropland acres with a PI less than 3.0 produce 18% of the total P load.

Twenty-two federal cost-share contracts, totaling \$621,000, have been written for practice implementation and 11 County contracts totaling \$51,100. In 2010, contracted farmers will begin to manage nutrients on all fields and apply other practices such as no-till, to the fields with a PI above 6.0 and apply practices to pastures with a

PI above 6.0, such as fencing cattle from streams and installing heavy use protection areas for feeding. In 2011, farmers will apply the same practices to cropped fields with PI below 6.0. In 2012, practices requiring construction, i.e. barnyard runoff systems, will be installed.

As practices are applied, a comparison will be made between PI changes and USGS water quality monitoring results in the Pleasant Valley and the Smith Conley watersheds.

### *Lake Mendota Is Next*

This same approach has begun in Lake Mendota Watershed. PI values have been run on the Pheasant Branch sub-watershed and on the lands tied to the Waunakee Community Manure (Digester) Management Facility. The data will be used to prioritize conservation practices implementation as well as track P reductions from these farms. Land Conservation will continue to run the PI on the highest priority sub-watersheds in Lake Mendota Watershed in 2010.

## Memo to Invasives—Keep Out!

**Gypsy Moth Suppression Program**—Since 2007 the Land and Water Resources Department (LWRD) has managed the Gypsy Moth Suppression Program in Dane County. Working cooperatively with the Dane County Tree Board, UW-Extension and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) the LWRD has enabled local units of government to participate in WDNR Gypsy Moth Suppression Grant Program. The Suppression Program allows the local unit of government to tap into a cost effective tool (aerial spraying) to counter outbreaks or high concentration of Gypsy Moth in very specific areas. In high populations Gypsy Moths can be very destructive to both rural and urban forests, especially oak trees. Program history in Dane County: 2008 - (23) Spray Blocks 2,400 Acres, 2009 - (34) Spray Blocks 2,700 Acres, Spring 2010 - (45) Spray Blocks 3,000 Acres.

**Emerald Ash Borer & the Wood Utilization Strategic Management Plan**—With the emerald ash borer already present in southeastern and western Wisconsin, the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department took steps to prepare for the invasive beetle's arrival. The emerald ash borer, or EAB, was inadvertently introduced in the Detroit area in the 1990s and has been responsible for the death of millions of ash trees across nearly a dozen states.



**When EAB adults emerge from beneath the bark, they create distinctive D-shaped holes.**

Thanks to an urban forestry grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Dane County began developing the *Dane County Emerald Ash Borer and Wood Utilization Strategic Management Plan* in January of 2008. With proactive preparation as its guiding philosophy, the County plan identifies actions for residents, municipalities, and local

officials to consider in order to meet the challenges posed by EAB. The plan consolidates essential information within one accessible, useable reference document. Incorporating input from agency personnel, local units of government, residents, and professional arborists, three goals were clearly identified which helped guide the planning process. They included:

- Reduce the environmental impacts of the EAB within Dane County.
- Mitigate the potential economic and social costs associated with emerald ash borer control efforts and damage.
- Find ways to put wood formerly considered "waste" to positive and profitable use.

A significant component of this plan is the focus on wood utilization. Since an increased volume of waste wood will be among the EAB's most significant consequences, the plan also outlines various options for dealing with waste wood—from infestations as well as potential storm events. Dane County hopes to further investigate value-added markets for urban wood products, including the use of wood as a biofuel to provide for alternative energy sources used to power our communities. For more information, please visit [www.countyofdane.com/lwrparks/emerald\\_ash\\_borer.aspx](http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrparks/emerald_ash_borer.aspx).

**Aquatic Invasives**—The discovery of spiny water fleas in the Yahara lakes in September 2009 underscored the importance of our actions to prevent additional aquatic invasive species (AIS) from arriving in Dane County waters. The flea can be bad for fish and water quality.



**Cluster of spiny water fleas on fishing line**

AIS have long been recognized as a serious problem in Wisconsin and Dane County. Invasive species upset the ecological balance, thrive at the expense of native species, and have negative economic impacts.

The Office of Lakes and Watersheds (OLW) completed the Dane County AIS Prevention and Control Plan in June 2009. The Plan relies heavily on information, education and outreach efforts. It also includes a full suite of other components of an effective prevention program including monitoring, early detection and rapid response strategies, watercraft inspection, biological controls, and policy initiatives.

OLW obtained \$100,000 in DNR grant funding for implementing Plan recommendations through the end of December 2013. There is the potential for an additional \$50,000 in federal funding for Dane County that could be used to extend the project for another year.

In the summer of 2009, OLW coordinated with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development on the hiring, training and supervision of three watercraft inspectors for Dane County. These youths were employed from August-October 2009 to conduct watercraft inspections on the Yahara Chain of Lakes. The Department of Workforce Development provided the funding for the program through federal stimulus monies and OLW provided oversight of the youth at the boat landings. Depending on the availability of funding, this program may be continued in the summer of 2010.

OLW also updated its AIS web site ([www.danewaters.com](http://www.danewaters.com)) to include the Plan, a listing of problem AIS currently found in Dane County waters, potential future AIS invaders, prevention and control tips, how AIS are spread, how residents/organizations/friends groups can get involved, and links to other resources.

## Partners Purchase and Restore Wetlands

For the past decade, Dane County has participated in a partnership that has brought \$3,000,000 into south-central Wisconsin for wetland conservation projects through a program fondly known as NAWCA.

NAWCA, The North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989, provides matching grants through a competitive process to organized partnerships that will carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The Act was passed to support activities under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international agreement that provides a strategy for the long-term protection of wetlands and associated uplands habitats needed by waterfowl and other migratory birds.

Our partnership developed *The South Central Wisconsin Prairie Pothole Initiative* (SCWPPI) proposal. The goal of the initiative is to reclaim Wisconsin's glaciated mosaic of wetlands surrounded by prairie and oak savannah. The proposal allows us to compete with other partnerships for NAWCA grant moneys to further our goal by securing and restoring wetlands and associated upland.

Our partners include the local offices of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Fish & Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Madison Area Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, Natural Heritage Land Trust and Wisconsin Waterfowler's Association. Other partners have come and gone over the years, including the Sand County Foundation, Aldo Leopold Foundation, Riverland Conservancy, Waukesha Conservancy, and private landowners.

Our SCWPPI partners' 2002 grant request for \$1 million was approved, and resulted in the purchase of 1,323 acres of wetland and associated uplands, and

restoration of 1,223 acres of wetlands and uplands. Dane County received \$122,000 in grant reimbursements for land purchased in Door Creek wetland.

The partners submitted new grant requests in 2005 and in 2007. Both were approved and \$2,000,000 were made available for grant projects. To date, most of these funds have been spent and have thus far aided the purchase of 3,054 acres of wetland and 55 acres of upland, and have funded restorations of 1,146 acres of wetland and 1,074 acres of associated uplands. (Dane County contributed 551 of the partnership's 2,000+ acres of restoration.)

Dane County's share of the \$2 million in the 2005 and 2007 grant moneys was \$145,350. Thus far, we've used the funds to restore wetlands on eight county properties (with one more remaining to be completed next field season). We've also cleared nearly 100 acres of former old-field, overgrown with brush, for prairie establishment and have now planted some 58 acres to prairie. We've also spent grant funds to restore prairie, wet meadows and sedge meadows by removing woody growth, and to improve oak savanna by clearing out invasives such as black locust, box elder, honeysuckle, buckthorn, etc. Some of our partners have spent NAWCA funds on lands in Dane County, most notably the Fish & Wildlife Service. They have partnered with us on many of our wetland restorations, adding some of their NAWCA funds to supplement our budget for wetland work.

The SCWPPI partners are considering requesting another \$1,000,000 in grants this year. Dane County can continue to be a partner by offering match, as all partners must. Since we made a land purchase last year that will easily qualify as match, we will most likely elect to remain a partner in the next SCWPPI application.

## Good News for Anglers! Better Habitat and More Public Access

The Streambank Easement Program was established in 2007 to permanently protect high quality, spring-fed streams that are capable of supporting cold-water fish communities and to increase public trout fishing opportunities. Streambank erosion and loss of fish habitat is a major threat to the County's cold-water streams, yet many of them have been restored thanks to the participation of landowners in the Streambank Protection Program that's administered by the Land Conservation Division. It's these streams that are a priority for protection through the Streambank Easement Program. Four easements were purchased in 2009 securing a total of 12 easements since the program was established in 2007. The easements cover nine miles of restored waters along the West Branch Sugar River, Primrose Branch, Gordon Creek, and German Valley Branch. Another six streambank easements stretching about three miles are proposed for the German Valley Branch.

In 2009, Land Conservation Division focused on protecting stream corridors along Vermont Creek. Technical and financial resources were used to improve and protect fish, wildlife and eroding streambank.

Conservation practices included bank shaping and seeding for stabilization, rock riprap, stream crossings/fencing for livestock exclusion, fish habitat structures (LUNKERS), and culvert replacement for fish passage. Three landowners along Vermont Creek completed 10,390 feet of stream protection and habitat improvement. These segments are additionally being considered for permanent protection through the Streambank Easement Program. The Natural Heritage Land Trust is applying for a DNR Stewardship Grant and Trout Unlimited has raised over \$16,000 to assist with the easement purchases. Continued programs, partnerships and landowner participation will provide habitat and water quality benefits, aesthetics and recreational opportunities for years to come!

Maps showing the location of improved streams and streambank easements are available online: [www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/fishing.aspx](http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/fishing.aspx).

If you've got a case of the winter blues, keep in mind that early spring catch and release season is a great time to explore our trout waters and try your luck at catching a big brown! Regular season runs from May 1 through September 30<sup>th</sup>.

## More People Using Parks Online Reservation & Permitting System

After one full-year in operation, the new Parks online program has been a great success. The key to the growth of the program has been greater public awareness. The online system and website information is well liked by patrons and is becoming the preferred method to conduct business with Parks vs. calling, stopping or sending their requests to the Parks office.

The online program provides an efficient and streamlined process for customers to purchase permits or

service while helping park staff track information and provide the services when requested. More than half of all reservations for shelters and camping are now being processed through the website.

In 2009, the online system helped increase overall revenues for facility rentals by more than 12%. Direct online sales for reservations and permits were over \$145,000.



## Harvesting Program Improves Water Flow & Navigational Access

Dane County's Aquatic Plant Harvesting program follows an approved Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Aquatic Plant Management Plan developed specifically for each water body. Generally, permits allow for the removal of vegetation to provide for navigation to open water, access to public facilities including boat launches, beaches and fishing areas, and for special events. Through a public planning process Dane County has developed a priority harvesting list that includes as the top priority Emergency Flood Relief (Lower Yahara River – Babcock Park to Fish Camp Park), Recreation and Navigation, Shallow Surface Cut (top cut of Eurasian Water Milfoil) and Special Events.

Since 2007, the County has utilized the service of a Weed Scout to identify issues and guide the harvesting effort. The Scout identifies areas of flow restrictions in the river and exotic vegetation limiting navigation on the area water bodies. This service provides more efficient use of the harvesters and staff to meet Aquatic Plant Management Priorities.

In 2009, as a result of high spring runoff, the Yahara Chain of Lakes experienced high water levels early in the spring. As priority, harvesters were placed in the Yahara River in early June maintaining a presence through September, resulting in 37% of total harvesting for the year. This is compared to August-September presence in 2007 (4%) and July through September in 2008 (13%).

### Flood Relief Harvest Activity for the years 2007-2009

Waterbody	Year	First Harvest Date	Last Harvest Date	% of Total Harvest
Yahara River	2007	13-Aug	11-Sep	4%
Yahara River	2008	14-Jul	3-Sep	13%
Yahara River	2009	4-Jun	28-Sep	37%

Traditional "Navigation Cuts" continued on the Yahara Chain of Lakes. Lake Monona received the most harvesting effort, but this occurred early in the season. Below is a summary of harvest activity by water body for the years 2007 through 2009.

### Navigation Harvest Activity for the years 2007-2009

Waterbody	2007 Hours	2008 Hours	2009 Hours
Mendota	487 (12.7%)	293 (10.2%)	220 (11.8%)
Monona (and Monona Bay)	2422 (63.1%)	1635 (56.9%)	635 (27.8%)
Waubesa	281 (7.3%)	188 (6.5%)	120 (5.3%)
Wingra	152 (4.0%)	69 (2.4%)	61 (2.7%)
Kegonsa	122 (3.2%)	217 (10.2%)	324 (14.2%)
Other (Tenney, Indian Lake, Vilas etc)	218 (5.7%)	23 (0.8%)	27 (1.2%)
Total Hours	3840	2875	2284

In 2009 the Office of Lakes and Watersheds (OLW) worked on many projects within the Department and with many external partners. Check out articles on aquatic invasives, Yahara CLEAN, and shoreland management elsewhere in this report for an update on three OLW major areas of focus.

Working with UW-River Falls, OLW developed the design and content of water recreation surveys to be implemented over the next couple years to help guide Dane County programs.

The 16-day Take a Stake in the Lakes Days (TAS Days) kicked off with the third annual Clean Lakes Festival, which raised funds for Yahara CLEAN and urban water quality grants. The 2009 Dane County Waters Champions were Kurt Welke, Michael Tierney and Don Esposito. OLW added a day-long paddle down the Wisconsin River to the list of Commission-sponsored TAS Days events, recognizing the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Board. Staff also began using social marketing media (Facebook and Twitter) to promote events with positive results.

The Better Lawns and Gutters Tour was held on August 15th, featuring rain gardens and native plantings in Fitchburg. Madison Audubon Society, Wild Ones and Healthy Lawn Team all joined OLW with tents at the information center.

The OLW shared water quality information with hundreds of visitors at the annual Canoeopia (sponsored by Rutabaga) and Green Day (sponsored by Isthmus Newspapers). OLW staff work closely with Information Management staff to not only keep the [www.danewaters.com](http://www.danewaters.com) content up to date, but to ensure that our site is user-friendly and appealing.

Dane County is a member of the Madison Area Municipal Storm Water Partnership (MAMSWaP), 21 municipalities working together to meet state and federal

stormwater discharge permit requirements. The LWRD is responsible for assuring that Dane County facilities within the permitted area also meet the required standards. The Alliant Energy Center and the County Highway garages in Madison are inspected on an annual basis for pollutant sources and overall maintenance. In addition, computer modeling of these facilities has shown that they are in compliance with the required sediment reduction requirements.

OLW provides a half-time Storm Water Education Coordinator for MAMSWaP. In 2009, the MAMSWaP I&E Committee developed a five-year work plan, hosted a salt-use workshop for snow plow drivers, implemented the Love Your Lakes Don't Leaf Them Campaign including radio ads, new brochures, yard signs and coasters, continued updating and maintaining information on the [www.myfairlakes.com](http://www.myfairlakes.com) website, developed displays, had booths at expos, gave several presentations and coordinated the Plant Dane! Cost-Share Program.

#### *Of Note...*

- 661 Take a Stake in the Lakes volunteers
- 30+ Take a Stake in the Lakes Days events
- 220 storm drains stenciled/marked during TAS Days
- 19 tons of garbage and debris collected during TAS clean up events
- 24 groups borrowed water sampling and other equipment from the OLW-supported Water Education Resource Center
- 3 youth worked at 10 Yahara lakes boat landings, and each youth conducted hundreds of AIS prevention boater contacts

## **Land Conservation Division**

### **Land and Water Resource Management Cost Share Program**

The Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) plan was developed to address soil erosion and water quality issues using local, state and federal programs. Each year the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection allocates funds to assist counties in the protection of their land and water resources. In 2009, the Dane County Land Conservation Division received a grant of \$61,394 to plan, design, and implement conservation practices. Landowners received up to 70% of the installation costs, up to a maximum \$6,000 per agreement. To receive the funds the landowner agrees to follow an

approved conservation plan and maintain the practice for a period of 10 years. Thirty landowners applied for cost share assistance through the LWRM program. Eighteen landowners had approved cost-share agreements amounting to \$61,391. Fourteen landowners installed conservation practices with four projects extended to 2010. Completed practices include grassed waterways, diversions, water and sediment control basin, terrace systems, waste facility closure and streambank protection.

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## Land Conservation Division—continued

### Urban Erosion Control and Stormwater Management

The Land Conservation Division administers the county erosion control and stormwater management ordinance. Adopted in 2002, the ordinance requires builders and developers to obtain permits and implement plans designed to reduce soil erosion and manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff. In 2009 staff issued 326 permits and conducted 3,102 inspections on 649 active sites resulting in an estimated reduction of 15,994 tons of soil erosion.

### Of Note...

Landowners assisted	789
Acreage under winter spreading plans	63,136 (107 permits)
Acreage of nutrient management plans developed in 2009	19,044
Streambank protection & restoration	10,850 ft
<b>NRCS Programs</b>	
▪ WHIP	11 contracts - \$169,008
▪ EQIP	42 contracts - \$895,759
▪ WRP	2 contracts
▪ FRPP	1 contract - \$421,163
▪ CRP/CREP/SAFE	35 contracts for 297 acres

### County Permit Activity Summary

Permit Type	Submittals Reviewed	Permits Issued	Active Sites	Inspections Performed	Contacts Initiated	Noncompliance Notices Issued	Stop Work Orders Issued	Citations Issued
Shoreland Erosion Control	261	161	259	687	227	23	9	2
Shoreland Erosion Control & Stormwater Management	27	4	18	55	17	0	0	0
Erosion Control	199	133	191	347	159	1	7	0
Erosion Control & Stormwater Management	87	28	50	167	67	5	3	1
Stormwater Management	5	0	1	8	9	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>

(Unincorporated areas of Dane County where the ordinance is administered by LCD)

### Intergovernmental Agreement Activity Summary

Municipality	Plans Reviewed	Active Sites	Inspections Performed	Contacts Initiated	Noncompliance Notices Issued	Enforcement Actions Recommended
DeForest	9	15	180	33	2	0
Middleton	31	43	522	204	11	2
Stoughton	11	18	237	45	2	0
Sun Prairie	11	40	660	80	12	1
Waunakee	7	14	239	36	3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>1838</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>

(Municipalities with intergovernmental cooperative agreements for plan review and site inspection)

2009 marked a year of quality, not quantity, for the Land Acquisition Division. Although the number of transactions and acres protected was down significantly, division staff were busy with projects ranging from park planning, habitat restoration, property development and lease oversight for other county departments. The Division also worked hard to bring in grant revenue and ended the year with a record \$3.5 million.

### Parkland Acquisition

- A small residential lot (approximately .5 of an acre) was purchased on the south end of Cam-Rock County Park. Acquisition of the property allowed for the development of a bicycle/pedestrian trail that now runs the entire length of the Park, connecting the Villages of Rockdale and Cambridge. The property included a house, which will be resold in 2010.
- Additional miles of permanent public access were acquired through streambank easements in southwestern Dane County. Read more about the streambank easement program in the article on page 6.
- Approximately 126 acres was purchased from the Patricia E. Anderson Living Trust in the Town of Oregon. The property features a nice woodlot on the north end and gently rolling topography. Patricia Anderson has since established two funds with the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin to provide for the long-term planning, development and maintenance of the property. *Special thanks to Patricia Anderson for her generosity, which will help ensure quality protection of the property into the future.*

### General Real Estate

- The former Badger School was sold as surplus property to the Center for Resilient Cities. The sale generated \$500,000 in revenue and the new owner plans on transforming the site into an urban agriculture and community center campus.

- Negotiated for the relocation of offices and an extended lease at the Job Center for various agencies of the State Department of Workforce Development. Provides occupancy of 17,622 square feet in the county-owned building and realizes \$264,330 annual revenue.
- Assisted with negotiations and space planning for county-occupied spaces at the Villager Center in South Madison. The county leases 23,085 square feet of space for Human Services agencies and 655 square feet of space for the UW-Extension Financial Center. These offices provide valuable community and county-wide services in a distressed area that is undergoing rehabilitation.



**Pat Anderson dedicates her property to Dane County**  
(l-r Lynette Anderson, Pat Anderson, Sup. Jerry Jensen, Sup. Brett Hulse, County Executive Kathleen Falk and Clerk Robert Ohlsen)

### Dane County Land & Water Resources Department Mission Statement

Dane County citizens value the quality of the County's natural, historic, and cultural resources, recognize the connection between these resources and their own quality of life, and expect these resources to be improved and sustained for present and future generations.

The Dane County Land and Water Resources Department exists to ensure the protection and enhancement of Dane County's natural, cultural, and historic resources; to provide the County's citizens with a broad array of accessible, high quality resource-based recreational services and facilities; and to support citizens, communities, local governments and other agencies and organizations in their resource management and protection activities.

The Department pursues its mission, alone and in collaboration with other agencies and organizations, through a mix of strategies that includes and combines resource management, program delivery, education and outreach, policy development, oversight, data management, technical assistance, responsiveness, and excellent customer service.

The major theme for the Parks Division in 2009 was “cost savings” - reducing expenditures while maintaining services. All program areas were scaled back with an emphasis given to meeting peak visitor demands between Memorial Day to Labor Day. Cost-saving measures included a reduction in seasonal staffing, condensed work schedules, less mowing throughout the park system, and limiting the number of shelters and other park facilities that remained open year-round. Lake Management operated six aquatic plant harvesters instead of the normal ten. The hours of operations for the Tenney Lock were reduced to a four-day instead of a seven-day schedule: Thursday through Sunday plus holidays. Spending was limited to essential supplies and materials.

The new on-line reservation and permit sales program was a huge success in 2009. The web-based program, developed by Dane County Information Management, allows patrons to make facility reservations and purchase park permits on-line. In the first full year of operation, the online system generated over \$145,000.

The winter recreation program received a big boost in 2009 with the purchase of a new wide-track snowmobile and ASV All-Terrain Tracked Vehicle. The recent winters have provided ample amounts of snow for winter activities. These two machines will maintain 26 miles of designated cross country ski trails.

Additional projects completed in 2009 include: development of the CamRock Trail from the Village of Cambridge to Rockdale, together with the installation of the last 10’ x 100’ bridge over the Koshkonong Creek at Rockdale; opening of Donald Park, Door Creek and Walking Iron Wildlife Areas for public use; development

of new group camp area at McCarthy County Park; installation of interpretive signage at Fish Camp; construction of vault toilets at Scheidegger Forest and McCarthy Park; assistance provided with the Stewart Lake restoration project; and construction of an elevator for offloading aquatic vegetation by Lake Management.

Major park planning projects included Badger Prairie Park Master Plan including the Lower Yahara River Trail, Capital Springs State Recreation Area, Black Earth Natural Resource Area and Token Creek Park and Natural Resource Area.

The Lussier Family Heritage Center had 385 events with an estimated attendance of over 21,000 visitors. The Center’s utilization rate was over 75%. The largest sponsored events continue to be the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area “Harvest Moon Festival,” attracting over 700 visitors, and the Dane County Parks “Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.”

Many groups and individuals volunteered for an array of activities in 2009. Park Friends Groups again lead the way with the majority of volunteer hours. There were many special events such as the Dog Park Clean-up, Youth Service Day, Day of Caring, and Community Days, as well as tree planting, vegetation management, facility restoration and prairie seed collection. Volunteers collected, cleaned and sorted over 700 pounds of flowering prairie plant seeds from over 80 different species this fall with a retail value of over \$100,000. Early 2010 prairie planting projects will occur at the Nine Springs E-Way, Lower Mud Lake, Yahara Heights and the Ice Age Trail.

***Of Note...***

Park visitors	1,240,000
People using the Capital City Trail at Lake Farm Park	101,090
Adult Conservation volunteers	1,259
Volunteer hours	29,168
Lussier Family Heritage Center visitors	21,000
Camping reservations	924
Shelter reservations	286
Parks 24/7 Information Line hits	22,412
Parks website hits	76,544
Park & Community Planning projects	16



Photo courtesy of John H. Moore

***Controlled prairie burn at CamRock County Park***

The value that the administration division offers to the Land & Water Resources Department is reflected in many of the articles in this annual report, from grant management to GIS and computer support, from departmental communication, to water resource planning and education. Administration provides a cohesive element to the department, and is an essential part of the success and effectiveness of all divisions.

Administration staff were involved in various projects and programs, including:

- online permit sales and Parks campsite and shelter reservations
- ongoing support for LWRD-staffed committees and commissions
- accounting support for annual budget process
- processing of annual archery hunt lottery
- compiling and submitting grant documentation for the annual single audit

This was the first year that Dane County Park permits were available for purchase online. Over 11,700 permits were processed in 2009. For more information, see article on page 7.

As one of the LWRD strategic planning priorities, administration staff created and produced a bi-annual interdepartmental newsletter to facilitate more effective communication between divisions and encourage a sense of shared accomplishment.

Administration staff continues to promote and manage the Lake Property numbering program. As of 2009, 30% of lake property owners installed an identifying lake property number to aid with emergency response from the water.

2009 marked the 9th year that Administration coordinated the volunteer stream monitoring program. A variety of citizens, including school kids, retirees, farmers and many others, monitor Dane County streams for stream health related issues such as turbidity, dissolved oxygen, flow, and the status of the invertebrate community.

### Of Note...

Management of bi-weekly payroll for:	48 FTEs 26 LTEs (yearly average)
Number of Park permits issued	11,734 total 8,260 via phone or park kiosk envelopes 3,474 via website
Number of purchase orders processed	176
Number of grants included in the Single Audit	47



## Awards

- **Dave Lemke—Parks Operations**  
Land & Water Resources Department—*Making a Difference Award*

## Staff Changes

### Welcome—

Two Park Operations position vacancies were filled in October and November of 2009. We welcomed Steve Herbrand, Park Maintenance Technician and David Haag, Park Laborer—Forestry.

### Farewell—

We also said farewell to three longtime Park Operations staff with over 85 years of cumulative experience who retired in December: Dave Lemke (40 years), Fred Paasch (31 years) and Ed Hillman (15 years).

## Contact Us

### ***Dane County Land & Water Resources Department***

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