

2012 Annual Report

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department



Take a Stake in the Lakes – Cleanup

County Executive Joe Parisi
Announces Protection of 40 acres of
Lake Waubesa Shoreline



Babcock County Park Overflow Lot



Grade Stabilization Structure



From County Executive Joe Parisi

The “Dane County Way” is to serve our residents well and present models of innovative programs from which others in our state and region can benefit. The Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) gave us outstanding examples of this in 2012.

Department staff excel at working together with one another, other Dane County departments, and their many external partners. For example, creative partnerships with local farmers, nonprofit organizations and local, state and federal government agencies help reduce phosphorus runoff into Dane County’s streams and lakes, improving water quality today and for generations to come.

This past year’s new recreational opportunities were developed for families from every corner of the county to enjoy year-round. CamRock County Park is now home to a new bridge and trail; Stewart Lake County Park now has a new ADA accessible fishing pier; Capital Springs State Recreation Area (Lake Farm County Park) now offers a new disc golf course and dog park; and much more.

Major steps have been taken to develop two new properties in the southern half of Dane County – Anderson Farm and Silverwood County Parks. Both will offer the outdoor recreation our parks are known for, as well as exciting new agriculture education resources for beginning farmers.

The Take a Stake in the Lakes volunteer shoreline cleanup program celebrated its 25th anniversary by expanding to broader corporate participation through a partnership with a private nonprofit. In addition, local residents and an international audience had a chance to engage with the scientists and managers at the core of Yahara watershed restoration work, in the North American Lake Management Society international symposium held in Madison last November.

With most county residents living just minutes away from significant natural, historic and cultural resources, it’s easy to forget how lucky we are. Dane County staff will keep working to protect and improve the lands and waters that contribute to our great quality of life. Their dedication is what makes our resources the true gems they are for all to enjoy.

A Note From the Director

Welcome to the 7th Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) Annual Report. We have some great projects to talk about which were accomplished in 2012! Among them: a new bridge at CamRock County Park; rehabilitation of the Babcock and LaFollette locks and dams with assistance from Dane County Public Works; improved energy efficiency at the Parks facility on Robertson Road; construction of an accessible fishing pier on Stewart Lake; continued development of the Springfield community manure digester and continued strong and effective partnerships with organizations such as Yahara Pride Farms, Clean Lakes Alliance, as well as numerous Parks Friends groups, who provide education and volunteer services while also supporting the park system.

Once again, these achievements are a result of the hard work and dedication of the LWRD staff in not only

accomplishing so many vital resource projects, but also for the vision and creativity that they consistently show. They are truly a team committed to exceptional customer service. They understand the value of working together with our many municipal and community partners to protect and improve Dane County’s soil and water, making Dane County a more enjoyable and healthy place to live today and into the future.

We hope you find this report informative, as these 2012 accomplishments benefit not only our land and water resources but all the residents of Dane County. If you have any questions, comments and/or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: connors.kevin@countyofdane.com.

Kevin Connors, Director

Dane County Promotes Cover Crops

Dane County Land Conservation sponsored two cost-share programs in 2012 to promote cover crops. The goal of the first program was to encourage farmers to plant cover crops that will reduce soil and nutrient transport to surface waters during the fall and early spring. The cover crops were planted in a variety of ways including broadcasting from an airplane on existing corn in August, and no-tilling into existing crop residue in September and October. Nineteen producers were paid \$40 per acre for a maximum of 50 acres. The total acres planted were 895.

The second cover crop program was developed to help livestock farmers with the forage shortage caused by the drought. Thirty-nine farmers were paid \$30 per acre for a maximum of 30 acres. The total acres planted were 965.



Winter wheat cover crop planted as part of cost-share program

Take a Stake in the Lakes Marks 25 Years!

Working Together for Fishable, Swimmable Waters for Over a Quarter of a Century

The Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission celebrated the 25th annual Take a Stake in the Lakes in June with volunteers, partners and corporate sponsors during two weeks of water-related events. The Clean Lakes Alliance collaborated with Lakes and Watersheds in 2012 to expand the event with busloads of corporate volunteers and greater visibility.



Dane County Executive Joe Parisi kicked off the Take a Stake anniversary year events on June 1st, joined by many partners including hundreds of volunteers from Lands' End, Friends of Monona Bay, Friends of Pheasant Branch, Holy Wisdom Monastery, Town of Westport, City of Middleton, Clean Lakes Alliance and the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission.

On June 5th, approximately 75 volunteers from Thermo-Fisher Scientific worked alongside Dane County and Village of McFarland staff at McDaniel Park on Lake Waubesa to make way for the Lower Yahara River Trail. Volunteers cleared invasives on about 2,000 feet of shoreline, resulting in a pile of cut buckthorn and honeysuckle that was nearly 500

feet long by four feet tall! Grateful LWRD Parks staff summarized the volunteer accomplishments: improved views and shore fishing access and rejuvenation of native species, including swamp white oaks (rare wetland community trees).

Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission members commended past and present volunteers, community leaders and sponsors for 25 years of unyielding commitment to improving our waters at the Waters Champion Award Ceremony held during "Jazz in the Park" at Wingra Park on June 16th.

Over the last quarter century, the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission's annual Take a Stake in the Lakes has grown from two days to over two weeks of countywide events focused on protecting and improving the county's lakes and streams. Thousands of volunteers have donated their time to clean up innumerable tons of garbage from Dane County's waterways, mark storm drains with "dump no waste—drains to lake" messages, and many other actions to help improve and protect Dane County's waters.

Together, we have made great progress in improving the quality of our waters and our community's quality of life. We look to the future and encourage everyone to continue the tradition of championing the lakes. Look for information on this wonderful event at www.takeastakeinthelakes.com.



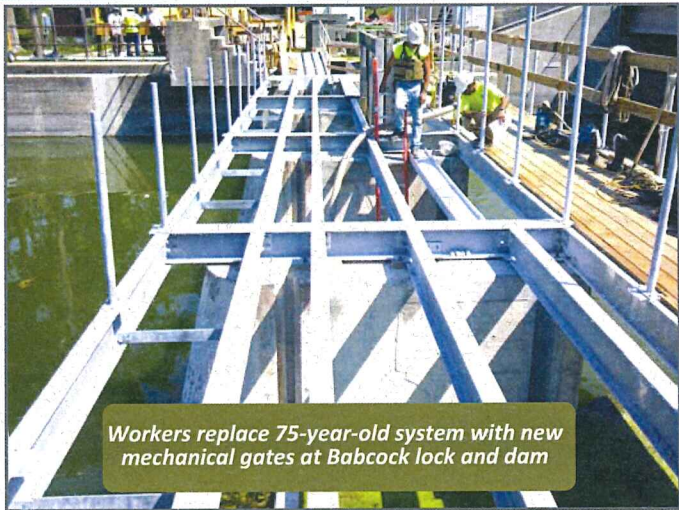
Lands' End volunteers help clean the lakes

Madison Area Municipal Storm Water Partnership (MAMSWaP)

Madison Area Municipal Storm Water Partnership (MAMSWaP) outreach activities are coordinated by a half-time stormwater education coordinator. Projects include the annual Plant Dane! Cost-Share Program; Retain the Rain Workshop; Love Your Lakes—Don't Leaf Them; Love Your Lakes—Don't Salt Them; DVDs; CDs; displays; presentations, and much more. Further information and materials are available at www.myfairlakes.com

2011	2012	myfairlakes.com Accomplishments
9,521	12,096	www.myfairlakes.com web hits
53	74	myfairlakes.com fans on Facebook
34	35	Plant Dane! workshop participants
69	132	Plant Dane! Cost-Share participants
4,472	7,260	Plant Dane! Cost-Share plants sold/delivered

Lock and Dam Rehabilitation a Boon to Water Management



Workers replace 75-year-old system with new mechanical gates at Babcock lock and dam

In the fall of 2011, rehabilitation of the lock and dam structures at Babcock and LaFollette County Parks began. These county-owned dams were constructed in the 1930's and have been in operation ever since controlling the levels of Lakes Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa with only minor maintenance.

The first phase of the project included concrete repair on the structures. Most of this work was performed underwater by SCUBA diver contractors and was completed in early 2012. The second phase of the project was the rehabilitation and operational improvement of the lock and dams. The lock structures at both dams were repaired and brought back into

working order. This is important as the locks are used to help control the amount of water that is released from the lakes and provide navigation to boats during normal and high flow periods. Improvements to the dams included the mechanization of gates on several of the dam bays. Two mechanized gates were added to the Babcock Dam and one mechanized gate was added to the LaFollette Dam. These upgraded gates are lifted and lowered using electric actuators and allow for precise changes to dam operation. Before these gates were mechanized, the county's only option for dam management was to manually remove six-inch high boards from each bay, which typically required three staff to accomplish. In addition, these newly mechanized gates may be controlled remotely by county staff over the internet. To help facilitate remote operation, cameras were installed on each automated gate to provide a view of the dam operation and ensure that the desired changes are made. The automated gates are now operational and the remote access is scheduled to be completed in March 2013.

Additional improvements were made at these two facilities. Fishing platforms were constructed on the backside of each dam to allow access to the most popular fishing areas. As funding becomes available, additional fishing access will be constructed. In partnership with the University of Wisconsin, remote sensing cameras were also installed on poles at each dam to experiment with new technology that measures flow rates in the Yahara River using only the cameras. This exciting new technology will be developed over the next several years.

PARC Grants are Popular and Successful!

The Partners for Recreation and Conservation (PARC) grant program continued to be a popular and successful program in 2012. Municipalities and non-profit organizations brought forward projects that offered multiple outdoor recreation and natural resource benefits. Matching grants totaling \$500,000 in county dollars were provided as follows:

Ice Age Trail Alliance - \$26,788 to develop a new segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and advance ecological restoration work along two existing trail segments.

Natural Heritage Land Trust - \$21,750 to hire the Operation Fresh Start's youth conservation crew to complete conservation and recreation improvements at five sites around the county.

Village of Cross Plains - \$134,049 to undertake a major stream habitat improvement project for Black Earth Creek and improve access to the stream.

Village of DeForest - \$134,049 to construct the final phase of a segment of the Upper Yahara River Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail.

Village of McFarland - \$23,110 to construct a critical link and trailhead for the Lower Yahara River Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail at McDaniel Park in McFarland.

Village of Belleville - \$134,049 to construct a bicycle/pedestrian bridge and other recreational facilities and habitat enhancements for the Sugar River and Lake Belle View.

Village of Cottage Grove - \$26,205 to construct a bicycle/pedestrian trail from the Glacial Drumlin State Trailhead to County Highway BB in Cottage Grove.



Sugar River bicycle/pedestrian bridge in Belleville

LWRD Staff Advance Watershed Improvements

Moving forward from their intensive efforts to prepare “A CLEAN Future for the Yahara Lakes: Solutions for Tomorrow, Starting Today” (published in September 2010 and available at www.yaharaportal.org—see below), Dane County and the other **Yahara CLEAN** signatory agencies partnered with groups such as the Clean Lakes Alliance to further engage the community and develop a focused plan to clean the lakes through phosphorus reduction. Staff from three Land & Water divisions, Administration, Office of Lakes and Watersheds, and Land Conservation, have made extensive contributions to Yahara CLEAN since its inception in 2008. The partners released the “Yahara CLEAN Strategic Action Plan” in November 2012, also available at www.yaharaportal.org.

The Strategic Action Plan includes a list of 14 actions (see table), with phosphorus reductions calculated for each action based on models, assumptions, and more than 30 years of monitoring data. The combination of actions focuses on a 50 percent reduction in the direct drainage sources of phosphorus to each lake in the Yahara River chain.

The **Yahara WINS** watershed adaptive management pilot project led by Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) is a critical component of Strategic Action Plan implementation. Yahara WINS is pioneering a new regulatory approach to address phosphorus, in which agricultural producers, municipalities, and MMSD work together in a cost-effective way to reduce phosphorus in the watershed. The pilot is being evaluated through a four-year project conducted in the Six Mile Creek subwatershed. Lessons learned there will assist future efforts to expand the adaptive management concept to the entire Yahara watershed.

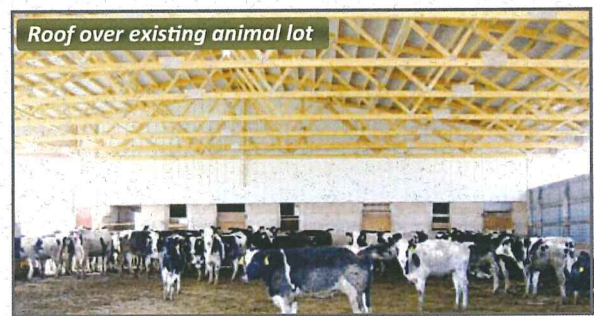
In 2012, the Land Conservation Division developed a Yahara WINS workplan to determine baseline phosphorus loads, define the procedures that are being used to inventory nonpoint sources of phosphorus in the pilot project area, identify and target high priority areas, implement phosphorus reduction practices, and verify the effectiveness of those practices.

The primary goal of this workplan is to lay out a systematic process for installing and maintaining best management practices that reduce the phosphorus loss from rural nonpoint sources, such as cropland. Within the pilot project area, staff plan to reduce phosphorus by approximately one pound/acre/year (10,800 pounds total).

Yahara Portal (www.yaharaportal.org), a new website launched in December, is a collaborative effort among Gathering Waters Conservancy and Yahara CLEAN MOU partners (Dane County, City of Madison, Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the Dept. of Natural Resources). The Office of Lakes and Watersheds is hosting this site to help users explore the history, science, and management of the Yahara Watershed including past and current work to improve lakes Mendota, Monona, Wingra, Waubesa and Kegonsa.

The **Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI)** is a four-year project (2010-2013) that focuses on three subwatersheds (Waunakee Marsh, Pheasant Branch and Six-Mile Creek) in northern Dane County and was a direct result of the Yahara CLEAN effort. The goal of the initiative is to provide financial and technical assistance to farmers to implement conservation practices that will reduce the amount of nutrients and sediments flowing into Lake Mendota. Since 2010, agricultural producers have entered into 38 cost-share agreements totaling \$1,061,826 in cost-share funds to install conservation practices. Office staff are currently assisting agricultural producers in the design and installation of conservation practices associated with these cost-share agreements. Funding to support these conservation practices has been provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Madison Community Foundation, Sand County Foundation, Walton Family Foundation, Dane County, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

These are exciting times for the Yahara watershed, with specific plans, funding, and community support coming together to improve the waters so enjoyed by our community.



14 Actions to Reduce Yahara Watershed Phosphorus

URBAN	RURAL
Improve leaf management	Improve cropping, tillage, and in-field practices
Improve control of construction erosion	Build community digesters
Maintain permitted stormwater facilities	Remove additional phosphorus at digesters
Stabilize urban waterway banks	Manage manure and nutrients
Reduce total suspended solids in municipal stormwater	Stabilize rural waterway banks
	Dredge drainage ditches
	Relocate or cover livestock facilities
	Harvest wetland plants
	Promote restoration of wetlands

Innovative Removal Stations Help Boaters Prevent Aquatic Invasives Transport

Dane County is an active partner in the fight against aquatic invasive species (AIS) in south-central Wisconsin. The past two summers (2011 and 2012), LWRD Administration and Office of Lakes and Watersheds AIS program leaders hired three interns to participate in the statewide Clean Boats, Clean Waters program. These interns inspected boats at landings throughout the county and educated boaters about the importance of removing AIS from watercraft. While boat inspections were slightly down from 2011, public contacts increased from 3.8/hour in 2011 to 4.0/hour in 2012.

In 2012, Dane County collaborated with DNR to install and maintain six Aquatic Invasive Removal Stations on the Yahara Chain of Lakes' busiest landings. For years, boaters have been reporting how difficult it is to reach vegetation below their boats and these stations now provide a direct



solution to this problem. The four-by-eight foot signs include tools for vegetation removal and compost bins for disposal. Early reports indicate that boaters are using these stations and placing vegetation in the bins. Not only does this help boaters clean their boats, but it also keeps the boat ramps clear from piles of vegetation.

LWRD also continues to engage bait shop owners in spreading the AIS prevention message. New for 2012 was staff participation in two DNR Warden

Team events focused on education and enforcement of AIS laws. Plans for 2013 include additional DNR and other AIS partner events, and a pilot project where staff will offer free bags of ice to anglers as part of the statewide "Ice Your Catch" campaign, designed to prevent accidental transport of live invasive fish and bait.

How to Restore a Wetland—The Ballweg Property

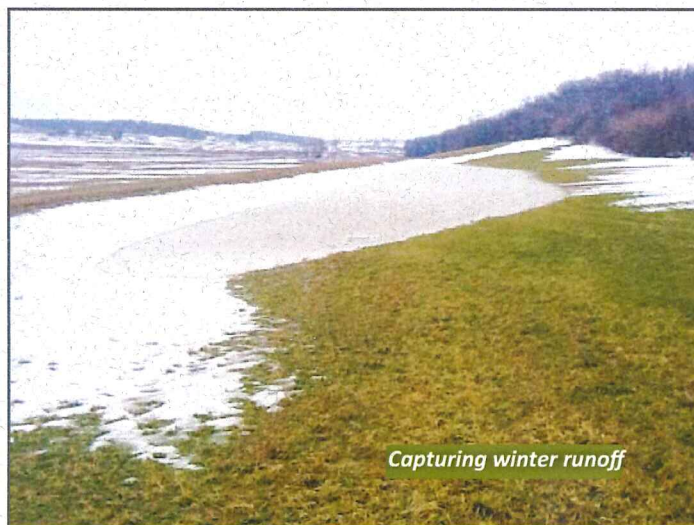
In December 2008, Dane County purchased the Ballweg property in the Town of Springfield for the purposes of preserving agricultural land and restoring wetlands. The property was evaluated for possible wetland restoration and it was determined that approximately 100 acres of the total 142 acres were suitable for some form of hydrologic restoration.

The property had multiple ditch systems separated by a main drainage ditch that bisects the property. As part of a phosphorus harvest and neighborly ditch maintenance, sediment was dredged from the main drainage ditch in December of 2010. A majority of the dredged material was spread on adjacent cropland but some was used to construct a diversion to facilitate a USGS monitoring study of cropland runoff. A WASCoB (water and sediment control basin) was constructed to treat runoff from 22 acres of adjacent cropland and further benefitted the USGS monitoring study.

In 2011, Dane County received a NAWCA (North American Wetlands Conservation Act) grant to perform wetland restoration activities on the property. The priorities for wetland restoration areas were to restore hydrology, provide wildlife habitat, reduce pollutant loading to surface water, provide flood storage and trap sediment, and manage vegetation to control invasive and undesirable species. A management plan was developed that identified best uses for specific areas based on site conditions and tailored to accomplish the aforementioned priorities.

Physical restoration of the site began in October of 2012 and included such practices as ditch plugs, excavated scrapes and flow control devices. Non-structural restoration included cessation of row cropping and planting of native vegetation. Some minor finishing work will be completed in the spring of 2013.

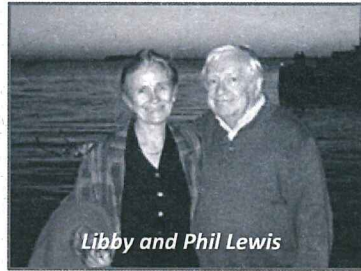
Restoration of the Ballweg property was and is an exercise in finding the balance between wetland restoration, pollutant control and agricultural land use that will hopefully serve as an example for restoration projects to come.



Newly Re-Named Lewis Nine Springs E-Way Honors Long-time Friends of Dane County Parks

In recognition of the many gifts that Phil and Libby Lewis brought to the Dane County Park System, the Nine Springs E-Way was dedicated in 2012 in their honor and is now known as the Lewis Nine Springs E-Way.

Through the teachings and advocacy of both Phil Lewis and his wife, Elizabeth "Libby" Lewis, Dane County adopted the Nine Springs E-Way project area, which extends from Dunn's Marsh at Seminole Highway east to Lake Waubesa and includes more than 1,300 acres under county ownership. The Nine Springs E-Way is the world's first "E-Way" and was recognized by the State of Wisconsin as a significant resource through the designation of the Capital Springs State Park & Recreation Area, which contains a large part of the Nine Springs E-Way. The "E" represents educational, environmental, esthetic and ecological resources that are linked through a shared corridor.



Libby and Phil Lewis

A significant trail system traverses through the Nine Springs E-Way, bringing what may be considered the fifth "E" to the corridor: exercise.

Phil and Libby also founded the Friends of Dane County Parks Foundation, which has provided significant private financial resources to the Dane County Parks system.

They were also active supporters of the Lussier Family Heritage Center, which is located in the heart of the Nine Springs E-Way.

Mrs. Lewis, who passed away on February 1, 2012, served with great distinction on the Dane County Park Commission for 26 years, from 1981 to 2007.

A full dedication ceremony, including new signage for the Lewis Nine Springs E-Way, will be held in 2013.

New Dog Park and Disc Golf Course Highlight Expanded Recreational Opportunities

Thanks to the hard work of Dane County Parks operations staff, many exciting park development projects were completed in 2012. The largest project was the completion of the Capital Springs Recreation Area dog park and 18-hole disc golf course. The dog park, which officially opened in October 2012, is approximately 40 acres in size and has a separate area for both large and small dogs. Users will encounter a mix of grassy open areas and prairie restorations as they traverse the site on crushed limestone paths. An 18-hole disc golf course was also developed immediately west of the new dog park area. The course was designed with the help of Larry Ast and other local disc golf advocates. The course surrounds the Gilman effigy mounds, constructed by Native Americans over a thousand years ago. Great care was taken to leave the mounds undisturbed and provide historical and cultural context and interpretation. The disc golf course will open for play in the summer of 2013.

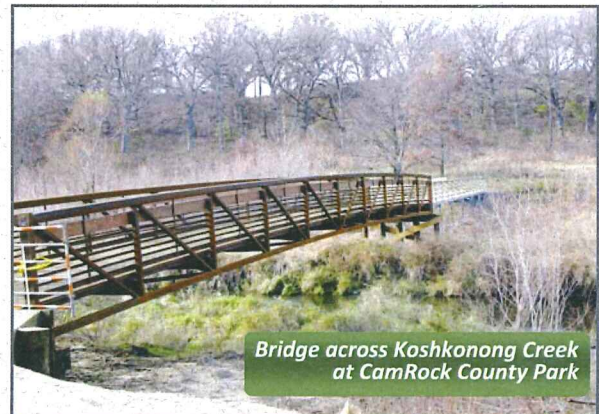
An additional nine holes were added to the Vallarta-Ast disc golf course at Token Creek County Park in 2012. County Executive Joe Parisi officially opened the new nine holes in May.

Several new bridges were constructed in 2012 to improve and expand the Dane County trail network. A 100-foot clear span bridge was placed over Koshkonong Creek at CamRock County Park in October. Two new bridges were also installed over Nine Springs Creek in the Capital Springs Recreation Area in December.

Finally, a new accessible fishing pier was completed at Stewart Lake County Park in December. The pier is located on the north end of the lake and was made possible through the partnership efforts of, among others, Mount Horeb Rotary Club, Mount Horeb High School, Sally Wilmeth and Terry Guerink, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Madison Community Foundation.

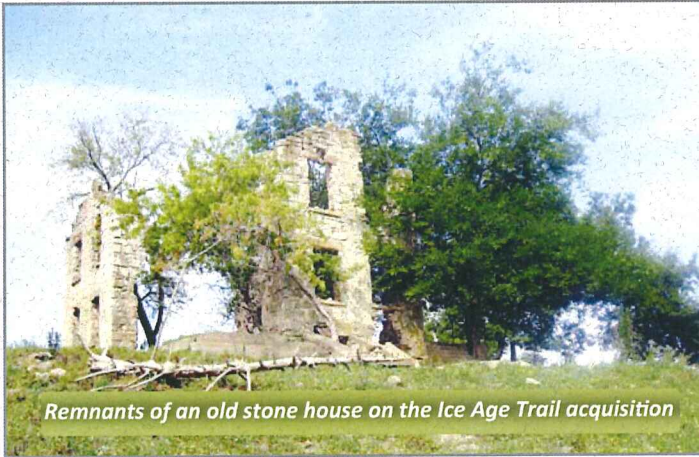


Setting tee box at new Capital Springs disc golf course



Bridge across Koshkonong Creek at CamRock County Park

Protected & Preserved! Real Estate Division



Remnants of an old stone house on the Ice Age Trail acquisition

Several great acquisitions were completed in 2012. As always, Dane County's focus was on implementation of the Parks & Open Space Plan and the preservation of water resources. The county is committed to partnerships that protect land and water resources and provide recreational resources for our residents.

- **South Waubesa Marsh:** Dane County purchased 40 acres along the shoreline of Lake Waubesa. The Town of Dunn contributed cash for the purchase and the Natural Heritage Land Trust secured a DNR grant that also went into the purchase. The acquisition is believed to be the largest remaining stretch of undeveloped, privately-owned shoreline along the Yahara Chain of Lakes. The acquisition also opens up public access to DNR lands that were previously land-locked.
- **Stewart Lake County Park:** Dane County purchased a small parcel at Stewart Lake County Park that has big impacts. The parcel includes an area for stormwater management, which protects the recently restored Stewart Lake from agricultural runoff. It also provides an opportunity for walk-in access to the park from the Village of Mt. Horeb.
- **Ice Age National Scenic Trail:** Dane County purchased approximately 140 acres of land for the Ice Age National Scenic Trail in the Town of Berry. The property is immediately north of Indian Lake County Park and provides incredible opportunities to view the glacial history of the landscape. The Ice Age Trail Alliance will secure a DNR grant to help fund the acquisition cost.
- **Capital Springs Recreation Area:** Dane County purchased a small parcel in the Capital Springs Recreation Area that will provide a route for campers and park visitors at Lake Farm County Park to walk to the recently opened Dane County disc golf course and dog exercise area.

- **Donald County Park:** The Woodburn Family Trust donated a conservation easement on 24 acres adjacent to Donald County Park with the hope of seeing the parcel remain in agricultural use. The easement also offers continued protection of Deer Creek, which runs through the property and is an excellent trout stream.
- **Cherokee Marsh:** Dane County awarded a grant to the Natural Heritage Land Trust and the City of Madison to protect land in the Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area. The acquisition protects the last undeveloped parcel within the City's Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park.
- **Prairie Remnant:** Dane County awarded a grant to the Prairie Enthusiasts to protect a 41-acre prairie remnant site in the Town of Christiana. Two glacial drumlins are present on the property that contain remnants of original prairie that support over 100 native plant species including a Federally Threatened and State Endangered plant species. The site provides excellent habitat for grassland birds and insects that depend on these high quality prairies.
- **Streambank Easements:** Dane County purchased five streambank easements to protect and secure public fishing access along three miles of cold-water trout streams. Two easements were purchased on Pleasant Valley Branch from Wayne Knutson and Herb Swingen, two on Kittleson Valley Creek from Roger Kittleson and Tracey Weigel, and one on Gordon Creek from Paul Thronson. Dane County also partnered with the Natural Heritage Land Trust to acquire a 68-acre streambank and public recreational trail easement along Black Earth Creek in the Town of Mazomanie that will provide for public fishing access and the construction of a multi-use trail.



Kittleson—Upstream from Highway H

Land Conservation Division

Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Program

The Land Conservation Division (LCD) administers the County Erosion Control (EC) and Stormwater Management (SM) ordinance. The LCD completed an audit of 514 SM sites permitted since 2002 for compliance with maintenance provisions of their permits and a report was written to determine post-construction maintenance needs. Staff provided four professional training opportunities to county officials, developers, and construction industry personnel. In addition, 640 newsletters were mailed in the spring to update these groups on Dane County's EC and SM program.

2012 marked the 8th year of the Urban Water Quality Grant (UWQG) Program. The goals of the program are to improve the quality of urban stormwater runoff entering Dane County

lakes, rivers and streams, increase public awareness of urban water quality issues, and provide public education for urban stormwater quality improvement practices. This program provides incentives to municipalities to install best management practices that will provide efficient, cost-effective treatment of urban runoff. Financial assistance is available in the form of cost-sharing up to 50 percent of the total project cost, not to exceed \$100,000. In 2012, the county awarded nine UWQG projects, a record high of \$725,000 in cost-shared dollars.

In 2012, LCD Urban Staff reviewed 866 permit applications and conducted 2,411 inspections on 562 active sites. Reference the tables below for additional statistics.

Sites	Submittals Reviewed	Active Sites	Inspections Performed	Contacts Initiated	Noncompliance Notices Issued	Stop Work Orders Issued	Citations Issued
County Administration	676	489	1472	752	12	29	8
Local Administration with Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreements ¹	190	73	939	150	3	-	-
TOTAL	866	562	2411	902	15	29	8

1. Municipalities with intergovernmental cooperative agreements with Dane County to provide plan review and site inspection services include: the villages of Cambridge, Deerfield, DeForest and Waunakee and the cities of Middleton, Stoughton, and Sun Prairie.



Stormwater basin—
2012 UWQG project in the Town of Burke

Cost-Share Program Supports County Conservation Practices

In 2012, the Dane County Land Conservation Division received a grant of \$60,242 to plan, design, and implement conservation practices. Landowners received up to 70 percent of the installation costs, up to a maximum \$6,000 per agreement. To receive the funds the landowner agreed to follow an approved conservation plan and maintain the practice for a period of ten years. Twenty-one landowners applied for cost-share assistance through the Land & Water Resource Management program. Eighteen had approved cost-share agreements amounting to \$60,193. Twelve landowners installed conservation practices with six projects extended to 2013. Completed practices include grassed waterways, terrace systems, grade stabilization structures, and subsurface drainage.

Productive Year for Nutrient Management Planning

Dane County continues to promote safe and accurate applications of fertilizer, including manure, through Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) cost-share programs. In addition, educational workshops and one-on-one assistance are offered to farmers who are interested in writing their own plans. Land Conservation Division staff trained 14 farmers (covering 2,926 acres) during a 2-day workshop in early 2012. An additional 145 producers developed nutrient management plans on 63,459 acres within the county, a 30 percent increase from 2011.

Landowners assisted	1,327
Acreage under winter spreading plans	67,426 acres (111 permits)
Acreage under a nutrient management plan	63,459 acres
Streambank protections & restoration	17,334 feet
NRCS Programs	
• CRP	1,083 acres
• EQIP	88 contracts for \$1,413,666
• CREP	1.9 miles of streams buffered

Office of Lakes and Watersheds

Many 2012 Office of Lakes and Watersheds (OLW) accomplishments are featured elsewhere in this report: the 25th anniversary of Take a Stake in the Lakes, Yahara CLEAN implementation and adaptive management, aquatic invasive species prevention and control, and the new Yahara Portal website. OLW's work stems from its mission of coordinating water-related policy initiatives and educating area residents about lakes, streams, and wetlands and the actions they can take to protect those resources.

The North American Lake Management Society's (NALMS) international symposium returned to Madison in November 2012, and OLW developed "Yahara



Lakes: Implementing a Vision," a one-day special session open to conference participants and area residents. "Yahara Day" featured 10 presentations and a panel discussion involving local scientists, managers, and conservation groups on successes and challenges of implementing water quality improvement strategies. Attendees also viewed "Green Fire," a documentary about Aldo Leopold.

Staff participated in the Yahara Lakes Advisory Group that completed its recommendations on effective management of the Yahara lakes as a system. The recommendations (www.countyofdane.com/lwr/landconservation/ylag.aspx) address water levels, watershed management, in-lake management, analyses, and education and outreach.

Working closely with Land Conservation staff, OLW also supported the Lakes and Watershed Commission in developing and adopting shoreland zoning ordinance changes to comply with state law and held several stakeholder meetings toward local adoption of updated state stormwater and erosion control requirements.

OLW contracted with Public Health Madison-Dane County to complete assessments of Goodland Park and Mendota Park beaches according to Environmental Protection Agency protocols. OLW staff also guided UW-Madison's Environmental Resources Center in completing a comparative analysis of 1996 and 2011 farm practices in the Mendota watershed.

In 2012, OLW's water recreation study of Dane County lakes and streams completed hundreds of brief interviews with water recreationists. This information will help refine further surveys planned for 2013, which will ultimately quantify economic impact from use of Dane County surface waters and help guide management decisions.

OLW is small in numbers (watershed management coordinator, half-time public information officer, and limited-term employee) and owes much of its success to enthusiastic collaborations within LWRD and with external agencies, municipalities, friends groups, watershed associations and private nonprofits.

2011	2012	Office of Lakes & Watersheds Accomplishments
10	8	Grant-funded projects managed
16,846	13,062	Visits to www.danewaters.com
270	306	DaneWaters fans on Facebook
249	343	DaneWaters followers on Twitter
904	1,152	Take a Stake in the Lakes (TAS) clean-up volunteers
35	42	TAS Days events
10	12	Tons of trash collected from piers during TAS
20	26	Groups borrowing equipment from OLW-supported Water Education Resource Center
472	55	Storm drains stenciled/marked
60	39	Legally noticed LWC meetings staffed
4,600	4,600	Boater contacts by three CBCW summer interns
4,108	2,031	Locations (points) sampled for plants by consultant
4	7	Number of water bodies sampled
	~250	Attendees at "Yahara Lakes: Implementing a Vision" at NALMS
	~70	Attendees at April and July Yahara Watershed Initiatives Briefings



The Dane County Parks System continues to expand to meet the goals and objectives of the 2012- 2017 Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan. In 2012, the system had over 2.2 million park and trail visitors and 95 special events/activities.

Park Friends' groups held over 38 events including: Bike Dane at CamRock Park; A View Through Time Archeology – Nine Springs E-Way at Capital Springs Recreation Area; The Harvest Moon Festival at Lake Farm County Park; The Donald Dash – Fun Run at Donald County Park; Youth Service Day at Festge County Park; Open House at Halfway Prairie School; Fun Run at Indian Lake County Park; Halloween at Lake View Hill County Park; Snow Day at McCarthy County Park; Kids of Earth at Pheasant Branch; Creating a Prairie at Stewart Lake County Park, and Harvest Fest at Schumacher Farm.

Dane County Parks sponsored a number of large regional and national events in 2012 such as the US Cycling – Cyclocross National Championships that drew an estimated 10,000 visitors to Badger Prairie County Park. Other events included a Wisconsin Off-Road Mt. Bike series event at CamRock County Park with an estimated 1,200 visitors, and the Big Ten Bass Fishing Championship hosted by the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Bass Federation State Championships at Lake Farm County Park. The county sponsored three youth fishing clubs throughout the summer, which linked inner city youth to county recreational opportunities. The Lussier Family Heritage Center hosted 381 events with over 20,500 visitors.

The Parks volunteer program continues to be a major contributor towards land restoration and habitat improvement on county lands. In 2012, despite a major drought, school groups, youth programs, and other service groups collected over 800 pounds of prairie seed from parks lands. In addition, volunteers planted over 28 acres of new prairies and helped with six prescribed burns.

Our volunteer chainsaw work crew, known for its ability to work in all weather conditions, contributed over 1,000 hours towards the removal of invasive species.



CNG fueling station at Parks & Lake Management operations facility on Robertson Road

The 20,000 square foot Parks and Lake Management Operations facility, located at 4318 Robertson Road, was renovated in 2012. Improvements include a new asphalt parking lot, new roof, new overhead and service doors and additional insulation. A compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station was added to supply the increasingly energy efficient fleet of dual-fuel Parks vehicles. The cost for natural gas is considerably lower than the price for fuel and has the added benefit of reduced emissions. Parks currently has 12 CNG vehicles out of a fleet of 32 vehicles.

Safety continues to be an important aspect of park operations. In 2012, Parks staff worked with the County Safety Coordinator to develop a comprehensive safety training program related to forestry/landscaping for all county agencies.

Lake Management added a new aquatic plant harvester and new barge to its fleet. A Lake Management equipment storage facility was built near Fish Camp along the Lower Yahara River.

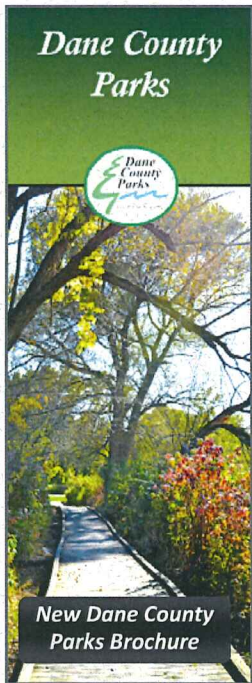
We look forward to 2013 and many new projects, including new communication technologies, that will enhance and promote Dane County's recreational opportunities. Enjoy your Dane County Parks!

Accessible fishing pier at Stewart Lake County Park



Park users	2,231,543
Trail users	116,000
Volunteers	3,566
Volunteer hours	46,335
Visitors to the Lussier Family Heritage Center	20,528
Number of camping reservations	1,395
Number of shelter reservations	608
Calls to Parks 24/7 Information Line	7,387
Visits to Parks website	130,000
Visits to reservedane.com	37,000
Special events held in Parks	68
Number of boats locked through Tenney Lock	3,708

Administration Division



One of the priorities of the Administration Division is to improve the delivery of information through departmental websites, publications, data transfers, the phone information line and more.

Administration played a vital role in the development of the 2012 Parks brochure. It highlights recreational opportunities in the Dane County park system, natural resource areas, wildlife areas, historical/cultural sites, forests, and public waterways. The glossy, full-color brochure is available in two sizes, a road-map size to keep in your vehicle or backpack, and a mini-map size, that fits perfectly into a pocket or bike/canoe bag.

The Division has been busy updating various departmental websites. Several parks websites have been redesigned to be more visually

appealing and user-friendly, including winter recreation, aquatic plant harvesting and dog parks. Thanks to a talented

volunteer, a picturesque virtual tour of Donald County Park is available here: www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/donald.aspx#donaldParkVideo.

All new brochures and publications now contain QR codes to refer people back to specific LWRD websites. These familiar looking codes can be used by smart phones to quickly access a website. Use your smart phone to read the QR code to the right and access the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department main webpage.



Customer feed-back helps chart our course and is essential to the successful operation of the Department. Administration is continually monitoring and improving Dane County Parks surveys, seeking to enhance our customers' experience.

Administration continues to have a direct hand in every other division of the Department, from Parks to Land Conservation, to Real Estate to Lakes and Watersheds.

Grant projects managed	30
Park permits issued	14,327
Number of camping reservations	1,395
Number of shelter reservations	608

Awards

Adam Alves, Parks—Land & Water Resources Department's 2012 *Making a Difference Award*

Sue Jones, Office of Lakes & Watersheds—Clean Lakes Alliance's First Annual *Yahara Lakes Stewardship Award*

Contact Us

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department
 5201 Fen Oak Drive, Room 208 (New address as of 10/1/12)
 Madison, WI 53718
 Phone: 608-224-3730 Fax: 608-224-3745
 TDD—Call WI Relay 711
www.countyofdane.com/lwrp



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 & 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.