

## **Introduction**

### **Background**

Crawford County wants to support and foster a locally led conservation effort to protect the county's and regions land and water resources. The county, through it's Land Conservation Department and Committee wishes to comply with Wisconsin Act 27 (the 1997-1999 Budget Bill) and Wisconsin Act 9 (the 200-2001 Budget Bill), amended Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin Statutes. It requires counties to develop a Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) plan.

Crawford County had its initial LWRM plan approved by the Land and Water Conservation Board in 2001. This is the first revision of the initial plan. Since completion of the 2001 plan resource concern continue to change. Some major trends affecting Crawford County are:

- NR 151 is passed, creating runoff performance standards and prohibitions
- Crawford County passed and is administering a nonmetallic mining reclamation ordinance.
- Use Value Assessment has shifted taxes on the landscape impacting forest use sometimes negatively
- Crawford County is cooperating with other agencies to provide technical support and administration for the Conservation Reserve Enhanced Program (CREP) that protects stream corridors
- Rotational grazing and low-cost milk parlors increase throughout the county
- Larger and more mechanized dairy production increases throughout the county
- Non-farm rural weekend residents are increasing in number along with the value of their residences and with their expectations for rural living education and services
- Citizens and agencies are increasingly concerns about invasive species

### **Plan Development & Public Input**

The County Land Conservation Committee, Department: (membership listed in appendix), and other local agency staff, including UW Extension, Planning and Zoning, NRCS field office staff, Farm Service Agency staff, DNR local and regional staff were consulted and had input in the ongoing development of this plan. A group of citizens representing a cross-section of county residents went through a group process to identify local conservation concerns and that was incorporated into the plan. All have received a copy for review and comment.

The Crawford County Land Use Group (A Citizen Advisory Group) (membership listed in appendix), meets throughout the year and the plan was discussed at their monthly meetings in January, March, and November 2005 in Gays Mills. This group has been meeting since 1996 and has served to give input for the Land Conservation, Planning and Zoning Committee and the Extension Committee in addition to its main topic of land use. At the March meeting the group wanted to continue the goals contained in the 2001 Land and Water Plan. Using the "nominal group process", a brainstorming and ranking activity formulated additional goals and resource issues. The following is a compellation of the original and additional goals and resource issues.

- Water quality and non-point source pollution.
- Impacts of inadequate land use planning
- Groundwater pollution and protection
- Nutrient Management education and research

Crawford County Local Work Group (membership listed in appendix), also reviewed the plan at their January and November meetings. They discussed the 2001 goals of the Land and Water Plan and formulated recommendations on how Crawford County could implement the Ag. Performance Standards. They are:

- The process should have a robust information and education effort
- The Land Conservation Department should use a voluntary approach
- The Land Conservation Department should develop a checklist procedure with the West Central Region of the DNR as guide to report violations.

### **Other Plans Considered**

Several resource management plans have a relationship to this plan. Data from these plans were reviewed in the development of the Crawford County LWRM plan:

1. State of the Basin Plans, Wisconsin DNR:

These plans provide an overview of land and water resource quality in their basins and outline actions to address resource concerns

- The State of the Bad Axe – LaCrosse River Basin, 2002  
Web site – <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/gmu/balax/basinplan.html>
- The State of the Lower Wisconsin River Basin,  
Web site - <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/gmu/lowerwis/lwbasinplan.html>

2. Crawford County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1982 (revised 2005 to include performance standards)

- This plan is to protect farmland from uncontrolled development, competing land uses, and promote sound conservation.

3. Crawford County Soil Erosion Control Plan, 1987

- This plan met the requirements of Chapter 92 statutes to identify county watersheds soil losses. It also details a plan of action and implementation to decrease soil erosion in priority areas.

4. Hydrologic Assessment of the Kickapoo Watershed, 1998

- This plan was written by the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and the UW Department of Geological engineering for the Trout Unlimited Home Rivers Initiative project in the Kickapoo Watershed. It assesses the hydrologic state of the area and makes recommendations for improvement.

**County Approval**

The Crawford County Land Conservation Committee held a public hearing on the Crawford County LWRM plan on December 6, 2005 in Prairie du Chien.

The Crawford County Land and Water Resource Management Plan was reviewed and approved by the Crawford County Board of supervisors on \_\_\_\_\_.