

CHIPPEWA COUNTY LAND AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Developed by the
Chippewa County Land Conservation Committee
in cooperation with the
Chippewa County Forest and Parks Committee and
Chippewa County Zoning Committee.

Chippewa County Land Conservation Department
Chippewa County, Wisconsin
December 15, 2004

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CHIPPEWA COUNTY LAND AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Wisconsin, Counties have been assigned statutory authority to plan and implement conservation programs to meet local needs. Recent changes in State law requires each county to develop a County Land and Water Plan. This plan has been developed to meet those requirements and to serve as a guide for local conservation efforts, administered by County, State, and Federal agencies.

This plan was developed using prescribed procedures for public participation, and is based upon recommendations of a citizens advisory group representing local agricultural and environmental interests.

A review of resource conditions has shown that current trends in rural development, production agriculture, and public recreation are placing an increasing demand on the natural resource base.

This plan summarizes the existing condition of land and water resources in Chippewa County and outlines land use and conservation issues of primary concern. It also describes, in detail, how the County will direct its programs to address these issues.

This plan clarifies how the County will work with local municipalities to plan and manage development. It proposes a process to be used to develop a County comprehensive plan and establishes a schedule for updating the Chippewa County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

This plan clarifies how the County will manage nonpoint source water pollution from agricultural and non-agricultural sources. To do so, it will begin to implement State nonpoint pollution and runoff standards established in WI Administrative Rule NR151.

In agricultural areas, public funds and personnel, historically targeted to priority watershed areas, will be reallocated county-wide to implement a Voluntary Farm Evaluation and Certification Program. This program will be used to systematically introduce and explain the NR151 agricultural nonpoint performance standards. Participation in the farm evaluation process will be a prerequisite and eligibility requirement for the allocation of technical services or State cost-share funds administered by the County.

The voluntary certification effort will be augmented by a regulatory program which will be administered and enforced by the Department of Natural Resources. This option will be used in select circumstances where a new or expanding facility does not comply with State or local permit requirements, or where runoff pollution from an existing operation has significant impact on surface water or groundwater. Farms subject to direct regulation by Chippewa County will be limited to livestock operations that are installing or altering manure storage facilities, subject to jurisdiction under the Chippewa County Animal Waste Storage Ordinance.

The roles and responsibilities of the County and State agencies, under the Voluntary Farm Evaluation Program, State and local permitting, and compliance enforcement, have been outlined in a free-standing Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.). This agreement is included as an appendix to the plan and will be used to systematically implement and assure compliance with the agricultural nonpoint performance standards.

In urbanizing areas, the County will work with municipalities to control stormwater runoff and nonpoint pollution from new developments. The County will work with the Department of Natural Resources and urbanizing towns in the Chippewa Falls urban area to develop a joint stormwater management program under the State's NR216 stormwater planning and permitting process. In developing this stormwater management plan, relationships between stormwater runoff and groundwater recharge will be considered in the interest of groundwater protection.

To control runoff from new developments outside this urban area, the County will review construction site erosion control and stormwater management plans produced by developers under NR216 and NR151.

With regard to the ongoing management of public lands, the County will complete a biotic inventory of plant species in the Chippewa County Forest. The forest will be managed for timber production, resource protection, and public use using management techniques to be defined in the County Forest Management Plan.

The County will work with town officials, State and Federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations to expand the public land base for future recreational needs. This will be accomplished by purchasing select parcels from willing sellers in designated management areas.

Efforts to directly manage the public land base will be augmented by efforts to purchase voluntary conservation easements on select parcels adjacent to public holdings for the purpose of public access and resource protection.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Statutory Authorities and Requirements

Wisconsin Stats., Chapter 59 assigns counties in Wisconsin the authority and responsibility to plan land and to adopt ordinances for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

Wisconsin Stats., Chapter 28 assigns counties the authority and responsibility to plan and manage county forest land. Wisconsin Stats., Chapter 59 provides the authority to plan and to manage parks and outdoor recreational facilities.

Wisconsin Stats., Chapter 92 establishes the framework for land and water conservation programs, and assigns counties the authority to establish standards, administer funds, and adopt ordinances for the purpose of resource management and land and water conservation. Chapter 92.10(6) creates a land and water management planning program and encourages counties, as a condition of State program funding, to prepare a County Land and Water Plan which meets statutory requirements.

2.0 PURPOSE

This plan has been developed to:

1. Document procedures which are used by the County to coordinate land use and resource management programs administered by County departments and State and Federal agencies.
2. Define local resource issues and resource management objectives, to be considered by County committees and departments in the administration of their respective programs.
3. Compile background information, which may be used at a later date, to complete the cultural, natural resource, and agricultural protection components of the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan.
4. Meet statutory requirements for County Land and Water Plan content, outlined in WI Stats. 92.10(6)1-8, as it applies to nonpoint source pollution control. To meet these requirements, this plan must:
 - Include an assessment of water quality and soil erosion conditions throughout the County, including any assessment available from the Department of Natural Resources.
 - Specify water quality objectives for each water basin and for each priority watershed and priority lake, as defined in s. 281.65(2).
 - Identify performance standards and prohibitions which will be used to control nonpoint source pollution and soil erosion, including those to be used under Chapter 92, Chapters 281 and 283, and ss. 59.692 and 59.693.

- Identify the best management practices which will be used to achieve State water quality and erosion control objectives.

- Establish a multi-year description of planned County activities and priorities for those activities related to land and water resources, including those designed to meet State water quality objectives and those designed to ensure compliance with nonpoint source pollution control standards and prohibitions.

- Describe a system to monitor the progress of activities described in the plan.

- Describe a strategy to provide information and education related to soil and water resource management.

- Describe a method for coordinating activities described in the plan with programs of other local, State, and Federal agencies.

Chippewa County will use an interagency planning process to review and upgrade this plan on an annual basis. The plan will be formally revised according to a five-year (5) schedule but may be amended if warranted before that time following procedures established in ATCP 50.12.

3.0 METHODS

This plan was prepared by the Chippewa County Land Conservation Department using a planning process adopted by Chippewa County and State and Federal agencies to identify natural resource management issues of concern, and to assign staff and financial resources to address those concerns. This process is outlined in the Chippewa County Operational Agreement with cooperating agencies, developed in April of 1999. Minor changes to this process were made to meet prescribed procedures for planning and public participation, as defined in WI Stats. 92.10 and ATCP 50.12 and 50.16.

This planning process was augmented by a systematic review of resource issues, management goals, and program objectives established in the Chippewa County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, as approved in December, 2001.

Planning oversight and policy direction was provided by the Land Conservation Committee through scheduled committee meetings. Significant efforts were made to encourage the full participation of the Chippewa County Forest & Parks Department and Zoning Department.

A local advisory group was appointed to assure structured input from a wide range of public interests. The composition of the advisory group and its assigned charge are provided as Appendix Figure 1.1.

The advisory group met five (5) times from October, 2003, to February, 2004, to systematically review the existing County land and water plan, and to provide input to the Land Conservation Committee. The record of the advisory group and Land Conservation Committee meetings, which documents points of policy discussion and decisions, are on file.

As a product of the process, an initial working draft of this plan was developed in February, 2004. The working draft was reviewed by the advisory group and the Land Conservation Committee in March, 2004. This working draft was then forwarded to local agency advisors for internal review and comment.

A public information project was then implemented to encourage public participation. Press releases were used to inform the public of the plan content and of scheduled listening sessions.

A series of five (5) informational meetings were conducted in June of 2004, to present resource management issues of principal concern and to explain the County's proposed management strategy to meet local resource management objectives. Opportunities for formal public comment were provided through a Class II notice and associated public hearing conducted June 22, 2004.

A record of comments received through the informational meetings and hearing process was compiled. These comments were considered by the Land Conservation Committee.

The press release used to inform the public of the listening sessions is provided as Appendix Figure 1.2. A summary of the meeting schedule, information presented, and public attendance is provided as Appendix Figure 1.3. A copy of the published public hearing notice is provided as Appendix Figure 1.4.

4.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING RESULTS

4.1 Geographic and Physical Characteristics of the County

Chippewa County is located in West Central Wisconsin. It encompasses 656,000 acres and lies entirely within the Chippewa River Basin of the Mississippi River. Map 1 shows the location of the County in proximity to the State and the upper Mississippi River drainage basin.

The surface topography and subsurface geology of Chippewa County has been strongly affected by recent glacial advances. Figure 1 illustrates physiographic areas which can be distinguished from landscape features and major soil associations.

A well-defined recessional moraine extends southeast from New Auburn, in the northwest corner of the County, to Jim Falls on the Chippewa River. From Jim Falls, glacial deposits extend further southeast to Cadott providing evidence of earlier glacial advances. Surface features of the moraines are characterized by hummocky topography, closed surface depressions and numerous kettle hole lakes, bogs, and wetlands. Soils of the area are of the Amery association. Land use is used predominantly for forest production, outdoor recreation, and residential development.

A gently rolling till plain, drained by the Fisher River and Yellow River watersheds, extends north and east of Cadott to the borders of Clark, Taylor, and Rusk County. Drainage patterns in these watersheds are poorly defined and reflect glacial processes. Many perched and groundwater contact wetlands are found in closed surface depressions and along drainage ways.

Soils are generally of the Magnor-Almena-Spencer Association. Till deposits are in turn underlain by Cambrian sandstone or Precambrian granite or gneis. Land is used predominately to support dairy-based agriculture.

A broad, nearly level, outwash plain extends south from the recessional moraine to the Chippewa River. The area is drained by subbasins of the Duncan Creek, Fisher River, and Lower Yellow River watersheds. Drainage patterns are very poorly defined. Wetlands are limited to groundwater contact areas adjacent to surface waters. Soils are of the Menahga-Friendship and Billett-Rosholt-Oesterle associations. Outwash deposits may extend 100 feet below the land surface and are underlain by Cambrian sandstone and Precambrian Granite. Land use is predominately agricultural.

A steeply rolling sandstone upland abuts the central outwash plain and extends west to the Dunn County border. The area is drained by the Red Cedar, Muddy Creek, and Duncan Creek Watersheds. Drainage patterns are very well defined with channelized intermittent streams often extending to the upper reaches of the landscape. Wetlands are limited to groundwater seep areas found in association with contact springs in hillside draws or adjacent stream channels. Soils are generally of the Elkmound-Plainbo-Eleva association or the Seaton-Gale association. Land is used to support agriculture.

Map 2 illustrates major soil associations. Map 3 shows the location of major surface waters, associated drainage basins, and current water resource monitoring sites.

4.2 Information on Resource Conditions

A series of reports, maps, and data sets have been compiled which summarize the condition of land, water, and associated natural resources in Chippewa County. Much of this information is contained in published management plans developed by County departments, the WI Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and the West Central Regional Planning Commission (WCRPC).

A listing of resource-based management plans, which describe natural resource conditions in Chippewa County, is provided in Table 1. This information is augmented by a number of detailed resource inventories which are systematically updated and maintained by County, State, and Federal agencies. A listing of pertinent resource inventories, data sets, and computer maps routinely maintained by public agencies is provided in Table 2.

4.21 Assessment of Land Cover and Land Use

A series of recent inventories have been conducted to document current land cover and land use. Current land cover has been established through satellite-based remote sensing techniques (1995 Chippewa County Land Use Project; 1993 State LANDSAT). The distribution of land cover, land use, and the status of transportation corridor improvements is provided in Map 4.

Ongoing development trends in unincorporated areas are monitored by the County through the well permit process. The location and distribution of new development in unincorporated areas of the County are provided in Map 5. Figure 2 illustrates the rate of development in unincorporated areas.

Figure 3 and Table 3 shows the rate at which agricultural land in Chippewa County is being converted to nonagricultural use. The status of town-based land use planning, and town participation in County Zoning is shown on Map 6.

4.22 Assessment of Soil Erosion Condition

The extent of soil erosion from agricultural sources was first documented through an inventory conducted by Chippewa County, as documented in the Chippewa County Erosion Control Plan, (1985). This inventory was based upon a representative sample of small watersheds and documented the physical characteristics, cropping management, and estimated erosion rates of individual farm fields.

Recent efforts have been made to update these estimates through use of a transect survey conducted in 2002 by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service. This survey documented the cropping practices, land cover, and soil erosion rates for a representative samples of farm fields in Chippewa County.

Results of the year 1985 soil erosion inventory and the year 2002 soil erosion transect survey are similar, and suggest that approximately 80% of farm fields are being managed within the erosion control standard for sustained production (T - value; USLE). The remaining 15% are farmed at the rate of 1-2 times T-value, with 5% farmed at greater than 2T. Results of these assessments indicate that higher rates of erosion occur on fields situated on sandstone uplands located in the western one-third of the County.

In 1985, the County instituted an annual crop reporting process to systematically monitor the management of farms subject to County soil and water conservation standards. Map 7 shows the location of farms which are routinely monitored and are confirmed to meet County soil and water conservation standards through participation in the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program and the Wisconsin Priority Watershed Program; Duncan Creek Clean Water Project.

Results of these monitoring efforts indicate a trend in production agriculture whereby smaller-scale dairy operations are being replaced by cash grain operations and larger-scale livestock operations. The trend toward more intensive agricultural use is substantiated through agricultural statistics which show an increase in row crop production and a corresponding reduction in dairy cow numbers, Table 4.

The extent of soil erosion from nonagricultural sources has not been formally evaluated or qualified. Current land use trends and general observations suggest that there are accelerated rates of erosion on construction sites in urbanizing areas, and accelerated rates of erosion associated with recreational use of County Forest lands.

4.23 Assessment of Surface Water Resource Condition

The condition of each lake, stream, and river in Chippewa County has been evaluated by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and has been characterized through use of a classification code assigned under the State of Wisconsin Surface Water Classification System. The code provides information regarding the current physical characteristics of the water resources, the degree and source of impairment, the potential optimal use, and the need for additional assessment, monitoring, and management.

A series of watershed tables have been compiled by the WDNR, which summarize water resource conditions. (The State of the Lower Chippewa River Basin, WDNR, 2000). An explanation of these tables and information available for watersheds in Chippewa County is provided in Appendix Figure 2.1.

The Department of Natural Resources has established instream water quality standards which apply to select classes of water resources. These water quality standards are subsequently used by the DNR to develop and implement strategies to meet water quality goals, set effluent discharge limits, and as a basis for making other regulatory, permitting, or funding decisions. The categories of water quality standards, which exist for each class of water, are defined by State administrative code NR102. This information is provided in Appendix Figure 2.2.

In response to requirements of Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act, the Department of Natural Resources has prepared a list of “impaired waters”. Through this list, the State identifies water bodies which do not currently meet water quality standards and those where the potential use of the water body is restricted by pollution or physical degradation. The Department of Natural Resources has placed a number of water bodies in Chippewa County on the 303d list.

Map 8 shows the location of exceptional and outstanding resource waters and the location of impaired surface waters, included on the 303d list as a result of sediment or nutrients. Rivers and streams with 303d designation include those located in the Yellow River and Paint Creek Watersheds, as contributing to Otter Lake, Moon Bay of Lake Wissota, and Little Lake Wissota.

4.24 Assessment of Groundwater Condition

The condition of the groundwater resource was initially established in 1985 through a comprehensive County Groundwater Inventory. The inventory was based upon information compiled from approximately 3,000 recorded well locations, and documented subsurface geography, aquifer characteristics, groundwater elevation, and groundwater chemistry.

This baseline inventory of groundwater information has been systematically expanded and is routinely maintained by the County through the County’s well permitting programs. Map 5 shows the location of wells permitted since 1985 where additional information about subsurface geology is now available from well logs.

The State, through its public water permitting program, systematically monitors groundwater chemistry. The County, through its rural drinking water program, provides a $\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$ sampling service. Map 9 shows the location of wells where information about water chemistry has been compiled through State and County drinking water programs.

Results of the combined groundwater inventories show that approximately 10% of groundwater samples exceed the EPA drinking water standard of 10 ppm of nitrate nitrogen ($\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$). Areas of high nitrate are widely dispersed with no apparent pattern of spatial concentration.

4.25 Assessment of Wetland Condition

The type, size, and location of wetlands in the County has been documented in the Chippewa County Wetland Inventory (WDNR, 1983, 1996). A second, more detailed inventory of agricultural areas has documented the location of wetlands, farmed wetlands, and converted wetlands (NRCS, 1987).

The condition of wetlands varies greatly based upon wetland location and surrounding land use. Activities which contribute to wetland degradation include wetland fills associated with urban development, sedimentation from urban and agricultural sources, changes in wetland hydrology from increased urban runoff, and loss of plant diversity.

4.3 Land and Water Issues of Priority Concern

Using planning procedures described in Sec. 3.0, the land use issues of priority concern have been identified, based on data in Section 4.22 - 4.25. They are as follows:

Issue 1 ***There is an ongoing trend in land use where nearly all new development in the County is occurring in unincorporated areas, historically used for agricultural production, in unsewered subdivisions located in the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire metropolitan area, and in shoreland areas.***

If not properly managed, nonfarm development in agricultural areas will have a negative effect on the viability of ongoing agricultural operations. Nonfarm residential development in agricultural areas causes land values to escalate, removes land from production, and increases the potential for conflict between farm and nonfarm residents. If not properly planned and managed, unsewered subdivisions in metropolitan areas will increase stormwater runoff and nonpoint pollution. These changes can, in turn, affect the quality and quantity on surface water and groundwater.

If not properly planned and managed, residential and commercial development in shoreland corridors will increase stormwater runoff and nonpoint pollution, causing direct impacts to lakes and streams.

Issue 2 ***There is an ongoing trend in production agriculture whereby small dairy operations are being systematically replaced by cash grain operations or by larger-scale dairy, hog, and poultry operations.***

If not properly managed, the change from livestock to cash grain cropping systems will reduce the diversity of crops grown and will result in higher rates of soil erosion, higher rates of commercial fertilizers, and pesticide use.

If not properly managed, the change from small dairy operations to large-scale livestock operations will result in higher concentrations of animals and animal waste at select locations. These higher concentrations at select locations increase the potential for point source air and water pollution and rural land use concerns.

In association with uncontrolled residential development in unincorporated areas, this trend toward more intensive agricultural use also increases the potential for rural land use conflict between agricultural producers and rural nonfarm residents.

Issue 3 ***As a result of current development trends, there is the potential for less biodiversity, an increase in exotic species, and loss of undisturbed natural areas.***

If not properly managed, ongoing changes in land use will result in the fragmentation of undisturbed drainage corridors and upland woodlots, the loss of native plant and animal species, and the general loss of wildlife habitat.

Issue 4

In response to current development trends and ongoing growth in the Eau Claire/Chippewa Falls metropolitan area, there is a greater demand for outdoor and nature-based recreational activities.

The accelerated use of public land, managed as part of the County Forest and Parks System and the State Parks system, has increased pressure on the public land base. As recreational use intensifies, there is the potential for direct impact on the resource base, conflicts among user groups, and a diminished experience for the recreational user.

Issue 5

In response to current development trends, there is an ongoing need for sand and gravel which must be mined from finite deposits located in select areas of the landscape.

Sand and gravel deposits in Chippewa County are generally found in proximity to lakes, streams, and rivers. These areas are highly sought and well-suited for development. If not properly planned, deposits of nonmetallic aggregate may be subdivided and developed.

If not properly planned, managed, and restored, nonmetallic mining operations may cause land use conflicts, create runoff and nonpoint pollution, and destroy the ongoing productivity of the land base.

4.4 Resource Management Goals and Policies

General management objectives for land use and natural resource management in Chippewa County have been discussed in a number of earlier planning efforts conducted independently by Chippewa County, the Department of Natural Resources, and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Specific goals and policies for land use and resource conservation in Chippewa County have been outlined in a series of previous planning efforts conducted by Chippewa County (Chippewa County, the Present and the Future, 1971; Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1985; Chippewa County Erosion Control Plan, 1987; Duncan Creek Clean Water Plan, 1991).

These resource management goals and policies have limited legal standing and may be considered archaic.

4.41 Land Management Objectives

Public goals, policies, and general management objectives for land and land use have been previously established in the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1985, and in WI Stats., Chapter 91.57.

For purposes of this plan, the resource management objectives for land conservation and development are as follows:

Objective 1 - To protect those agricultural lands within the County identified as prime agricultural land, land capability classes I-III. (Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1983).

Objective 2 - To encourage future development within or adjacent to urban service areas and in areas where development has been explicitly planned by a municipality where public services and facilities will be provided. (Altered from Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1983).

Objective 3 - To protect areas of special environmental, natural resource, or open space significance. (Wis. Stats. 91.57).

4.42 Surface Water Management Objectives

General management objectives for surface waters located in Chippewa County have been established in a report published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, titled The State of the Lower Chippewa River Basin Plan, (2001). These State objectives are recognized by Chippewa County as a foundational element of interagency efforts to manage water resources.

The agency's program goals for surface water resources, as provided by the WDNR West Central Region, are as follows:

- Implement and promote shoreland habitat protection and restoration activities.
- Identify and protect critical fish spawning, reproduction, and nursery habitat.
- Develop recommendations to improve fish habitat on large rivers by conducting fish and habitat studies.
- Improve critical fish habitats to enhance sport fisheries.
- Achieve water quality improvement for 303d listed impaired waters.
- Support grant programs available to local units of government for pollution control activities.

- Support implementation of the Agricultural Performance Standards, as described in Administrative Rule NR151.
- Improve stream habitat and public safety by removal, modification, or operational changes of identified dams.

The DNR Bureau of Watershed Management is responsible for Wisconsin’s 303(d) Impaired Waters Program and for the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) strategy to improve the condition of impaired waters. As part of current State program efforts, the DNR West Central Region has initiated the resource monitoring, data collection, and modeling phase of the TMDL planning process for three (3) impaired water bodies in the Lower Chippewa River Basin located in Chippewa County: Otter Lake, Little Lake Wissota and Moon Bay of Lake Wissota. Results of that effort have been summarized in a report titled: Phosphorus Loading and Trophic Status of Lakes in the Yellow River Watershed, West-Central Wisconsin, (February, 2004).

The Bureau has conveyed its intent to begin to develop TMDL’s for these impaired waters in the immediate future, subject to continued Federal and State funding. This intent is outlined in correspondence provided as Appendix Figures 2.3 and 2.4.

For the purpose of this plan, the resource management objectives for surface water in Chippewa County are as follows:

Objective 1 - Maintain, improve, and restore the natural condition of the shoreland corridor, littoral zone, and instream habitat of streams and lakes.

Objective 2 - Reduce sediment and nutrient loading to surface waters from nonpoint sources to levels necessary to meet:

- A. The potential use classification for the waterbody, as designated in the Wisconsin Surface Water Classification System, or
- B. The planned water resource management objective, or the prescribed Total Maximum Daily Load Limits (TMDLs), as developed through a formal watershed planning process, or
- C. Instream water quality standards as established for individual lakes, streams, or stream reaches.

4.43 Groundwater Management Objectives

For the purpose of this plan, the resource management objectives for groundwater in Chippewa County are established as follows:

Objective 1 - Limit/reduce groundwater concentrations of nitrate, atrazine, and other NR140 contaminants to within respective Preventative Action Limits (PAL), as measured in groundwater aquifers in unincorporated areas.

Objective 2 - Limit/Reduce groundwater concentration of contaminants to within prescribed limits for public and municipal water supplies as defined in NR140.10 and NR140.12.

Objective 3 - Maintain historic groundwater levels by limiting depletion of groundwater resources, from high volume consumptive uses, to avoid environmental impacts to wetlands, springs, and surface waters, as measured by surface discharge rates.

Objective 4 - Maintain historic groundwater levels by limiting depletion of groundwater resources from competing consumption uses and changes in groundwater recharge in urbanizing areas in aquifers which are used for municipal water supplies, as measured by permanent drawdown in wellhead protection zones.

4.44 Wetland Management Objectives

For the purpose of this plan, the resource management objectives for wetlands in Chippewa County are established as follows:

Objective 1 - Avoid destruction of urban and rural wetlands, and maintain the hydrologic and water quality functions that these sites provide within the watershed.

Objective 2 - Minimize the further degradation of urban and rural wetlands, and wetland functions within the watershed.

Objective 3 - Compensate for the loss of urban and rural wetlands through onsite mitigation or wetland restoration conducted to reestablish the natural functions, hydrologic values, and plant communities in the immediate watershed of wetland loss.

Objective 4 - Restore wetlands, which have been degraded, to reestablish the natural functions, hydrologic values, and plant communities which have been degraded.

Objective 5 - Achieve a “net gain” of wetland acres through wetland restoration and creation, as measured through program tracking and wetland inventory monitoring.

4.5 Application of Nonpoint Performance Standards and Best Management Practices to Pursue Land and Water Resource Objectives

WI Stats., Chapter 92.07 authorizes the Land Conservation Committee to develop and adopt standards and specifications for management practices to control erosion, sedimentation, and nonpoint source water pollution.

WI Stats., Chapter 281 requires the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop performance standards to control nonpoint source water pollution from agricultural and nonagricultural sources. These performance standards have now been established in Administrative Rule NR151.

4.51 State and County Standards

In Chippewa County, the performance standards to be applied to control agricultural and non-agricultural sources of nonpoint pollution will be those established in WI Administrative Rules NR151 and NR216.

The State nonpoint runoff standards will be augmented by other local conservation standards, developed by the County for other purposes, prior to the adoption of NR151. These local soil and water conservation standards are as follows:

1. Soil and water conservation standards for Farmland Preservation (April, 1986).

Note: It is the intent of the County to retain these standards and apply them to existing Farmland Preservation agreements through the term of each agreement.

2. Minimum management standards, planned and adopted as cross compliance/eligibility requirements for the Duncan Creek Clean Water Project (May, 1994).

Note: It is the intent of the County to retain these standards and apply them to existing watershed contracts until the operation and maintenance period of each contract expire.

3. Chippewa County non-metallic mining siting and reclamation standards (1995).
4. Chippewa County stormwater management standards, applied in circumstances of rezoning and large-scale subdivision proposals (1999).

With the adoption of this plan, it is the intent of the County to:

1. Retain and upgrade the existing Chippewa County soil and water conservation standards for Farmland Preservation, and apply these standards to all program applications administered by the LCC.

The existing standards have been revised to do the following:

- Incorporate the NR151 standards;
- Reference RUSLE II and establish a requirement to prevent ephemeral and gully erosion in areas of concentrated flow; and
- Remove the size limit for wetland management to be consistent with State and Federal policy.

The amended County soil and water conservation standards are contained in Appendix 3.

2. Retain the previously adopted County non-metallic mining siting reclamation standards.

3. Retain previous adopted County Stormwater standards for use in select applications where stormwater quantity and flood control are identified as management issues of local concern.

Explanatory Note:

It is the intent of the County to apply State stormwater water quality standards, established in NR151 and NR216, as a requirement in all circumstances where these standards apply.

In conducting stormwater plan reviews, the County will recognize and administer other, more restrictive, water quality or water quantity-based standards, but only in circumstances where these local standards have been adopted or are administered by a municipality through local ordinance.

The existing County stormwater standards will be retained as a voluntary reference for use in local zoning and subdivision applications, at the discretion of local municipalities.

In circumstances where it is deemed necessary to develop or apply more restrictive performance standards to control nonpoint pollution, the County will follow administrative processes for State review and approval, as established in WI Stats., Chapter 92 and 281.

4.52 Best Management Practices

The best management practices, which will be used to control nonpoint source pollution from agriculture, forestry, and urban sources, will be those established in the following guides:

- Wisconsin Adaptation of the USDA, NRCS Technical Guide.
- The Wisconsin Handbook of Forestry Best Management Practices.
- Wisconsin Construction Site Erosion Handbook.
- Wisconsin Standards Oversight Council (S.O.C.) Standards.

In circumstances where public cost-share is provided, producers are obligated, under State and Federal administrative rules, to install conservation practices. The conservation practices are as established in ATCP 50.61 - 50.98, in accordance with prescribed technical standards. Examples of these practices include structural measures such as surface water diversions, barnyards, sediment basins, manure storage structures, and non-structural practices such as field layout, crop rotations, crop residue management, and stream buffers.

As an alternative to cost-shared practices, Chippewa County will actively encourage agricultural producers to meet performance standards through the use of innovative management techniques, which may not be contained in the State's technical standards or best management practice handbooks. These innovative techniques may include structural or non-structural measures which enable the landowner to demonstrate that a performance standard has been achieved and can be maintained on a continuous and ongoing basis.

4.53 Use of Computer Models for Planning, Permitting, and Compliance Monitoring

In cases where an administrative rule or local ordinance requires the use of a specified computer model to simulate an environmental process or to administer a prescribed standard, the model will be evaluated and will be calibrated for local conditions.

The model will be evaluated by reviewing published documentation to verify its development history, validity, limitations, and potential applications. The model will be calibrated using data sets collected through environmental monitoring, or through direct comparison with a previously accepted model, using a common data set.

In order to accurately apply environmental models, onsite verification will be conducted to confirm or measure the physical features and conditions of the landscape being modeled. This onsite verification will be conducted in all cases where models are used by public agencies, agency service providers, or consultants to estimate rates of soil erosion, sediment, phosphorous, or pesticide runoff, stormwater infiltration, or groundwater leaching.

In applying models to local conditions, input variables will be selected to reflect or account for the most limiting environmental feature within the area being modeled.

If input variables cannot be physically measured, assumed values may be used. When used, assumed values will be explicitly identified in the documentation of model inputs along with the basis for the assumption.

For purposes of farm evaluation, farm planning, and State grant administration, summary tables of model outputs, developed for common site conditions and management systems, may be used by the LCC and Department in lieu of physically running the prescribed computer model.

Summary tables of model outputs will be accepted for purposes of compliance screening and site specific planning conducted by the County only in circumstances where:

1. The responsible technical and regulatory authorities within the County have reviewed and pre-authorized the use of the summary model application.
2. Input variables have been measured, documented, and field verified, and
3. Tabulated model outputs indicate that proposed management system is within 70% of, and clearly meets, the prescribed management standards.

Summary tables of model output will not be applied or be considered acceptable in circumstances involving regulatory permitting or compliance enforcement. When applying models or considering model output for permit compliance or enforcement, full documentation of model inputs and outputs must be provided. Documentation will be sufficient to allow the administrative authority to verify site conditions and replicate the model outputs.

Note: With reference to the RUSLE II soil erosion model, Chippewa County has adopted the model and has defined conditions of its application through the Chippewa County Soil and Water Conservation Standards (Appendix 3).

The County will follow policy directives for RUSLE II transition and delivery as outlined in DATCP and agency correspondence to counties, dated May 20, 2004, and April 15, 2004.

4.54 Overview of Approach to Administer NR151 Agricultural Nonpoint Performance Standards

Given the limits of public funding, the County will change its approach toward water resource management from an effort to improve water quality in select watersheds to an effort to maintain water quality throughout the County by controlling runoff from urban development and from new and expanding agricultural operations. In circumstances where the State initiates a targeted watershed planning effort, the County will assist and cooperate in that effort within the limits of accelerated State funding.

As a basis for its program efforts and to control nonpoint pollution from agricultural sources, the County will implement a voluntary farm evaluation and certification program. Participation in the farm evaluation process will be a prerequisite and eligibility requirement for the allocation of technical services or State cost-share funds administered by the County.

The County will seek to work cooperatively with the USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service to develop and optimize voluntary opportunities which will enable producers to use USDA conservation programs to meet State performance standards.

The process that will be used to administer the standards is that outlined in State planning guidance titled: Implementation Strategy for NR151, Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions, (April 2002, Appendix E, Land and Water Resource Management Guidelines).

The specific roles and responsibilities of Chippewa County and State agencies in implementing these standards have been outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) between the County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. This agreement will be used to assure compliance with the agricultural nonpoint performance standards. A copy of the M.O.U. is provided as Appendix 4.

Under this program approach, onsite evaluations will be systematically scheduled and conducted to introduce and explain the agricultural nonpoint performance standards.

In conducting evaluations, the County will pursue a comprehensive approach toward parcel evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, the County will determine which of the State standards apply to parcels being evaluated and determine the extent of compliance for each of the applicable standards.

Upon completion of the evaluation, the County will review the results with the landowner and provide the opportunity for review, comment, and appeal. In circumstances where full compliance has not yet been achieved, the County will work with the landowner to secure technical assistance and cost-share funding available to pursue compliance.

The voluntary component will be augmented by a regulatory option. Farms subject to direct regulation will be limited to:

1. Operations which require permits under the Chippewa County Animal Waste Storage Ordinance to install or alter manure storage facilities.
2. Livestock operations which are new or expanding and which require zoning or conditional use permits for livestock expansion through the Chippewa County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.
3. Operations which are subject to State jurisdiction under WI Stats. 281 and Wis. Administrative Rules NR243 or NR151 that are found to be out of compliance with the NR151 agricultural standards, as determined by a site evaluation conducted as part of routine permit monitoring or in response to a public complaint.

In responding to public complaints, priority will be assigned to livestock facilities and cropping operations located in “water quality management areas” and shoreland corridors.

Copies of current ordinances are on file as public record with the Chippewa County Clerk.

4.541 Fiscal Policy

To encourage participation in the voluntary farm evaluation and certification program, and to optimize the use of available cost-share funds, the County will attempt to dovetail State funds with Federal funds to increase the public cost-share rate for operations that seek to meet the State’s agricultural performance standards and prohibitions.

To accomplish this, the County will request that USDA agencies allocate a portion of federal conservation cost-share funds for landowners that participate in the County’s voluntary farm evaluation and certification program. The County will attempt to negotiate with the USDA for reimbursement of technical services provided.

In circumstances where cost-share funding is required to support non-voluntary enforcement action, the County will attempt to secure State grant funding available through State programs.

4.542 Priority for Servicing Farms

Public requests for administrative, technical, and regulatory services, administered through the Land Conservation Committee, currently exceed the capability of the County to provide these services.

It is anticipated that the cost of fully servicing State conservation programs, administered under ATCP 50, NR151, and NR216, will exceed the State staffing grant allocations offered under ATCP 50.30(3).

In establishing its service priorities, the County will require that landowners that request services or funds allocated by the Land Conservation Committee, participate in a voluntary farm evaluation process (Section 4.54), and commit to meet County Soil and Water Conservation Standards (Appendix 3).

In allocating its resources, the County will recognize legal requirements imposed by ATCP 50.16, and attempt to meet those requirements within the limits of State staffing grant funding.

In administering the agricultural performance standards and prohibitions, the County will allocate its staff and financial resources to farm operations according to the following priorities:

High Level Services

- New and expanding livestock operations, subject to regulation under the Wisconsin WADES permit system or the Chippewa County Manure Storage Ordinance.
- Existing agricultural operations subject to public complaint or State enforcement action under NR243 or NR151.
- Existing agricultural operations that participate in the Chippewa County Farm Evaluation and Certification Program, located in State Water Quality Management Areas (shoreland zones), wellhead protection areas, or areas of high groundwater NO₃-N concentrations.

Medium Level Services

- New and expanding agricultural operations, and existing agricultural operations that participate in the Chippewa County Voluntary Farm Evaluation and Certification Program, located outside of local surface and groundwater priority areas.

Low Level - (No County Service Available)

- All other operations.

4.543 Priority for Public Cost-Share Allocations

The agricultural performance standards and prohibitions, established in NR151, have been adopted to control nonpoint pollution. Public funds available from State and Federal sources are expected to be limited.

To most cost effectively pursue water resource management objectives, the County will pursue a comprehensive full farm, all standards approach toward farm evaluations. In administering this approach, the County will assign cost-share funding priority to those farms agreeing to pursue full compliance.

In circumstances where public cost-share funds are limited, the agricultural standards and prohibitions have been prioritized so that they may be implemented through a phased approach. These priorities have been established based upon the source of nonpoint pollution and the environmental cost effectiveness of implementing each performance standard.

The priority for implementing the standards, when conducted through other than a fully funded whole farm, all standards approach, is outlined in Table 5. It is the intent of the County that the local system of priorities be considered by State and Federal agencies as local strategies are developed and decisions are made regarding public cost-share allocations.

4.55 Overview of Approach to Administer NR151 Non-Agricultural Performance Standards

To control nonpoint pollution from non-agricultural sources, the County will work cooperatively with local municipalities and State agencies to implement performance standards for stormwater runoff, as established in NR151.10.

As a basis for its efforts, the County will work with affected municipalities in the Chippewa Falls urban area to develop and implement a stormwater management program under the EPA MS4/DNR WPDES permitting process. To accomplish this, the County will work with the affected municipalities to develop a joint stormwater management plan which meets criteria established in NR216.

To augment this effort, the County will do the following:

1. Work cooperatively with DNR to assure stormwater plan review of all land divisions resulting in disturbances of one (1) or more acres.
2. With the County Highway Department and DNR, work cooperatively with the Towns and municipalities to meet standards for roads and transportation related facilities, as established in NR151.20.

5.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Responsibilities to Address Issues of Priority Concern

Chippewa County will use this plan to convey its local resource management objectives and priorities to local municipalities and cooperating public agencies. The plan will be used to encourage other units of government to recognize and help to resolve issues of local concern.

In Chippewa County, primary responsibility for implementing land and natural resource related programs and ordinances have been assigned to three (3) committees of the County Board; the County Forest and Parks Committee, the County Zoning Committee, and the County Land Conservation Committee.

The responsibility for implementing the program activities outlined in this plan are delegated to the committee and department with the specific statutory and County Ordinance authority to implement the activity.

To encourage structured communication, the Land Conservation Committee will, on an annual basis, convene a work group and sponsor an interagency planning process, as outlined in the Chippewa County Operational Agreement. County departments will be encouraged to use this process to evaluate progress and to develop grant requests, budget proposals, and staffing plans.

Land and water management issues of priority concern will be systematically addressed by the County. These issues are defined in Section 4.3 of this plan. The County's program goals, objectives, and recommended activities are provided in Section 5.2. The actual extent of program support and service levels will be established by each governing committee and by the County through the annual budget process.

5.2 Land Conservation Committee Program Support and Service Levels

With regard to programs administered by the Land Conservation Committee, efforts will be made to provide core program services by maintaining the current County tax levy, as now allocated to fund land and water conservation related programs.

The County's commitment to extend services beyond that core levy commitment will be dependent based upon its ability to secure funds through outside grant sources and its capacity to secure funds through other non-levy revenue, including reimbursement through local service fees or municipal, State, or Federal service contracts. Priorities for plan implementation and associated service levels will be set based upon the availability of this combination of revenue sources.

At present, the demand for program services exceeds the capacity of current allocations. It is anticipated that the level of State staff funding support, administered to the County through DATCP and DNR grant programs, will be reduced in the 2006-2007 biennium. It is also anticipated that new sources of revenue staff funding may be available through federal service contracts or through direct service fees, charged to participants who participate in State or Federal conservation programs.

In anticipation of unstable State and Federal revenue sources, a contingency plan will be developed to assist in the adjustment of services and staffing levels in the event that revenue from outside sources can not be maintained.

5.21 County, State, and Federal Program Priorities

Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 92, establishes the duties and powers of Land Conservation Committees. Chapter 92.07 authorizes the Committee to establish a local program, including authority to distribute funds, participate in State and Federal conservation programs, and to employ staff to provide technical services.

It is the intent of the County to use this plan to clarify for WDNR, DATCP, NRCS, and FSA its priorities for program implementation in the interest of pursuing natural resource management objectives, as established in Section 4.4.

Towards this end, the County will allocate its local resources and will provide any available remaining program support to State and Federal agencies according to priorities established in Table 6.

5.3 Program Goals and Objectives

Program goals and objectives have been developed to describe how the County intends to address resource management issues of priority concern.

Goals have been established with reference to land use planning and zoning, nonpoint pollution control, biodiversity, and public lands management.

Program objectives are provided for each goal. Program objectives are outcome based, measurable, and are intended to be accomplished over a period of years. A sequence of actions is provided which will be used to pursue each program objective.

5.31 Land Use Planning and Zoning

Goal 1

Jointly pursue County responsibilities toward land conservation and water management (as defined in WI Stats., Chapter 91 and 92), in association with County responsibilities toward land use planning and land use ordinance administration (as defined in WI Stats., Chapter 59).

Objective 1

Evaluate and respond to changes in State legislation affecting local land use and environmental programs.

Action 1 - Evaluate effectiveness and deficiencies of County's existing Farmland Preservation approach. (LCD)

- Analyze costs/benefits of continued support of WI Farmland Preservation Program.
- Develop and implement local farmland protection pilot project.

Action 2 - Evaluate livestock siting legislation, comprehensive planning legislation, and groundwater legislation, adopted in 2004. (LCD/Zoning)

Action 3 - Annually evaluate future legislation and administrative rules, as adopted. (All)

Objective 2

Provide opportunities for greater communication and cooperation in land use planning between the County, towns, and other municipalities.

Action 1 - Actively track, monitor, and report the location and rate of new development in unincorporated areas. (LCD)

- Maintain Chippewa County well permitting GIS database.
- Print and distribute annual maps of new development.

Action 2 - Sponsor biannual land use educational conference to support Town and County land use planning efforts. (UWEX/LCD)

Objective 3

Provide planning and educational support to encourage towns to form Town Plan Commissions and to develop and implement Town land use plans.

Action 1 - Provide planning services to towns that have no land use plan. (LCD)

- Provide land use planning services and technical support through a formal three-way service contract with WCRPC, or through other options negotiated at Town’s request.

Note: Through this process, determine Town land use policy regarding rural residential density, agricultural production zoning, livestock facility siting, and parks and trail planning.

Objective 4

Provide planning and educational support to Towns that have formed Plan Commissions and have developed Town land use plans.

Action 1 - Provide planning services and technical support to Towns that intend to develop or implement subdivision or zoning ordinance development that is available. (Zoning)

Note: This support will include distribution of model ordinances; limited consultation in ordinance development and drafting, assistance in selecting appropriate zoning districts and developing a proposed Town Zoning Map from a town land use planning map; and formal review of town ordinances through the public notice and hearing process.

Objective 5

Prepare to meet County responsibilities for comprehensive planning under the Wisconsin “Comprehensive Planning” Law.

Action 1 - Implement educational processes. (UWEX/Zoning/LCD)

- Inform and educate elected officials representing towns, villages, and cities regarding the comprehensive planning requirements.
- Inform and educate County Department Heads, the County Board, and County Committees regarding the comprehensive planning requirements.

Action 2 - Prepare intergovernmental planning options for consideration by elected officials.

- Develop a planning model which would allow interested municipalities (that choose to develop a “Comprehensive Plan” for their municipality) to do so by participating in a combined and coordinated planning process to be initiated by the County.
 - Formally survey each town, village, and city to determine each municipality’s intent, method, and schedule for pursuing the comprehensive planning requirements (i.e. acting independently, acting jointly in cooperation with neighboring municipalities, or acting collectively in cooperation with the County).

Action 3 - Using survey results, determine the scope and the time frame of the County's planning process, including a general project schedule and project budget.

- Assign County committee charges and decision making authority.
- Establish County committee networks and communication mechanisms to assure structured coordination.
- Decide whether or not to apply for a State planning grant to implement the planning process.

Action 4 - Develop a project design, service contracts, and a budget necessary to conduct the planning process.

Action 5 - Commit County resources (money, staff) to implement the planning process.

- Execute service contracts.

Action 6 - Complete the planning process.

- Develop a written County Comprehensive Plan.
- Submit to appropriate committees and State authorities.

Objective 6

Systematically review and update selected County land use ordinances.

Action 1- Initiate a “comprehensive revision” to the County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. (Zoning)

- Set schedule; formally notify all towns of revision process (WI Stats. 59.69(5)).
 - Finalize pallet of standardized zoning districts; seek town comment.
 - Assist towns to select districts to be applied within its jurisdiction. If necessary, customize the selected districts for each town to create a unique pallet for the town.
 - Assist towns to develop and submit a revised town zoning map which will define which districts are proposed for which locations.
- Note: Towns that have developed town land use plans should consider these plans and/or apply a set of objective criteria to create the proposed zoning map.*
- Hold public hearings.
 - From those now participating in the County Comprehensive Zoning, accept town request for adoption or dismissal within the statutory review period.

Action 2 - Develop a County Stormwater Management and Construction Site Erosion Control Ordinance, in conjunction with the Chippewa Falls Urban Area NR216 stormwater planning and permitting process. (Zoning)

- Review City of Chippewa Falls ordinances (proposed).
- Develop a management strategy and ordinance framework to administer NR151 and NR216 permit requirements within and outside of the NR216 permit area.
- Present draft ordinance to Stormwater Management Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Zoning Committee, and affected municipalities for review and comment.
- Hold public hearings.

Action 3 - Develop a revised Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. (Zoning)

- Develop a phased approach toward revising the ordinance using a series of amendments.
- Develop local standards for shoreland development and redevelopment which will be applied.
- Revise and redraft ordinance.
- Present draft ordinance to Zoning Committee and affected municipalities for review and comment.
- Hold public hearings.

Note: Consider incorporating lakes and streams management categories, as defined in the Chippewa County Lakes and Streams Classification System.

5.32 Nonpoint Pollution Control

Goal 2

Introduce nonpoint source performance standards, technical assistance, cost-share incentives, and a clearly defined regulatory framework to provide local resource protection.

Objective 1

Systematically introduce and phase in the agricultural pollution control component of the County Land and Water Program using authority of WI Stats. 59, 92, 281, and Administrative Rules NR115, NR243, NR151, and ATCP 50. (LCD)

Action 1 - Formally adopt State performance standards for agricultural nonpoint source pollution control, as defined in NR151.

Action 2 - Develop and implement an educational outreach project to inform and educate agricultural producers, rural landowners, and the general public about the standards.

Action 3 - Maintain a voluntary farm evaluation and certification program following the priorities and management approach established in this plan.

- Establish a program of public recognition for producers and farm operations that are in full compliance with State standards.

Action 4 - Implement a well-defined County regulatory framework to assist the State to enforce the standards under NR151.

- Implement the DNR/County MOU which clarifies the regulatory framework and County and State responsibility for enforcement action.
- Administer the County Animal Waste Ordinance to require on-farm evaluations as a condition of permit application.

Action 5 - Actively participate in the Wisconsin WPDES Permitting Processes administered under NR243 or NR151.

- Implement the DNR/County MOU which clarifies the responsibility of the County and the State in large-scale livestock permitting and program implementation.

Action 6 - Maintain County commitment to wetland protection and management in agricultural areas.

- Conduct wetland delineations.
- Provide technical support and oversight on agricultural drainage and maintenance projects subject to local, State, or Federal regulations and permits.
- Maintain Chippewa County wetland inventory to document the location of wetland loss and gain.

Action 7 - Participate in Yellow River watershed TMDL planning process.

Objective 2

Systematically introduce and phase in the nonagricultural pollution control component of the County Land and Water Program using the authority of WI Stats. 92, 281, and Administrative Rules NR103, NR115, and NR216. (LCD/Zoning)

Action 1- Maintain the existing working agreement between the Zoning Department, the Land Conservation Department, and DNR to assure stormwater plan review for development proposals in unincorporated areas, subject to NR216 stormwater permit requirements.

- Modify agreement to reflect changes in NR216 and agency priorities.
- Initiate review of stormwater/erosion control plan for sites less than 5 acres in response to new Federal/State requirements.
- Provide planning assistance to cities and towns on issues related to stormwater management.

Action 2 - With affected municipalities in Chippewa Falls urban area, develop stormwater management program which meets EPA Phase II and NR216 permit requirements.

- Prepare a joint stormwater management plan following process defined in NR216 grant application.
- Seek plan approval from affected municipalities.
- Apply for WADES stormwater permit(s).

Action 3 - Maintain and expand County rural groundwater monitoring program.

- Conduct hydrogeologic studies and monitor groundwater quality in rural areas to document aquifer conditions, groundwater flow systems, groundwater chemistry, and changes in groundwater chemistry over time.
 - Develop project design, cost estimates, and grant proposal for a Lake Hallie/Hallie/Lafayette residential sampling project.
 - Develop project design, cost estimates, and grant proposal reinventory of 1985 sampling project County-wide.

Action 4 - Support municipalities in wellhead protection planning projects.

- Conduct hydrogeologic studies and monitor groundwater quality in support of municipal wellhead protection efforts.
- Develop project design, cost estimates, and grant proposal to do stormwater management/runoff/groundwater supply study for Village of Lake Hallie water supply.

Action 5 - Maintain current County commitment to wetland protection and management in urban and developing areas.

- Conduct wetland delineations.
- Provide plan review and technical oversight of development projects subject to local, State, or Federal wetland regulations or permits.

5.33 Biodiversity of Plants and Animals

Goal 3

Develop and administer programs which support biodiversity and which encourage the management and protection of native plant and animal species.

Objective 1

Recognize conservation corridors and areas of unique ecological significance as priority areas for voluntary and incentive-based land conservation programs directed to private landowners.
(LCD)

Action 1- Define and objectively identify the location of these areas, based upon physical criteria and mapping conventions.

Action 2 - Research project approaches which have been successfully applied to create conservation corridors where public objectives, toward water resource management, parks, and trail-based recreation have been integrated.

Action 3 - Define a local implementation project(s) and seek grant funding to encourage targeted resource protection and public access to selected project areas.

- Develop a project design, cost estimates, and grant proposals for a water management/recreational corridor in the Chippewa Falls/Lafayette/Lake Hallie urban area.
- Develop a project design, or a water management/recreation corridor to complete the Ice Age recreational trail in Chippewa County.

Explanatory Note

It is the desire of the County to encourage rural landowners to permit public access to allow for public hunting, fishing, and recreational opportunities.

Action 4 - Provide onsite consultation and financial incentives to private landowners to encourage the reestablishment and management of native plant communities in selected project areas.

Action 5 - Administer the Wisconsin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

- Review and revise local administrative procedure(s) with DATCP, FSA, and NRCS to manage work load and service requests.
- Negotiate renewal of USDA service contracts for 2004-07. As a priority, County services will be directed to assist landowners to participate in permanent buffer (easement) program option.

Note: The CREP Program will be managed in 2004-05 as the County's highest priority for implementation of State and Federal conservation programs.

Objective 2

Provide technical and financial support to local municipalities, land trusts, and private nonprofit conservation organizations that work to preserve unique, threatened, or endangered resources on private lands. (LCD)

Action 1 - Send a formal letter of introduction to local land trusts and land conservation organizations explaining County's objectives and resource management interests.

Action 2 - Maintain and expand the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund to support acquisition of land and/or conservation easements by municipalities or nonprofit organizations for conservation purposes.

- Administer the program policies and procedures as established by the County Board.
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of expanding the utility of available program options.
- Develop fiscal strategy and seek additional funding sources to support program expansion.

Objective 3

Apply the Chippewa County Lakes and Streams Classification system as a basis for County lakes and streams habitat management and protection efforts. (LCD)

Action 1 - Apply the classification system to monitor and analyze shoreland development trends.

Action 2 - Establish a Chippewa County wild lakes and streams protection project as a companion to the Wisconsin Scientific and Natural Areas Program.

- For lands owned and managed by Chippewa County, upon completion of biotic inventory, solicit candidate lakes and headwater stream reaches from the County Forest and Parks Committee and Department.
- For lands owned by private parties, contact landowners. Explain purpose of protection efforts and determine interest on behalf of the landowner to explore options for permanent protection.

Objective 4

Encourage biodiversity in the planning, reclamation, and end land use of non-metallic mining sites.

Action 1 - Identify voluntary program approaches which can be used to encourage the use of permanent conservation easements and native plantings in site restorations. (LCD)

Objective 5

Encourage biodiversity on public lands by supporting the efforts of the custodial agencies responsible for developing and administering property management plans.

Action 1 - On County Forest lands managed by Chippewa County, cooperate with DNR to complete a biotitic inventory of County Forest and adjacent State recreational areas. (Forest & Parks)

- Identify and map areas of unique ecological significance.
- Amend County Forest Plan and State Land Management Plan to describe how these areas will be managed.

Action 2 - On public lands managed by State agencies, actively participate in the public participation process used to develop and periodically revise property management plans. (Forest & Parks/LCD)

- Compile a list of public lands and associated land management plans.
- Review existing plans with custodial agency representatives to identify management opportunities.

5.34 Recreational Use of Public Land

Goal 4

Administer public lands managed as part of the County Forest and County Parks system, to assure adequate resource protection while balancing the needs of competing outdoor recreational interests.

Objective 1

Explore opportunities to better integrate the County's forest, parks, and outdoor recreational planning efforts with town and municipal parks and trail planning efforts. (Forest & Parks)

Action 1 - Review and update the County Outdoor Recreation Plan on a regular schedule.

- Formally invite municipalities to participate in planning process to update the County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Action 2 - Send letters to Towns that are doing land use or comprehensive planning to consider outdoor recreation and parks planning as part of those efforts.

Objective 2

Plan, identify, and manage public land and recreational use areas to limit conflicts between competing interests. (Forest & Parks)

Action 1 - Review and update County Forest Plan on a regular schedule.

- In plan, consider recognizing the public objectives of forest production, public use, and resource protection as the “highest and best” use of the property.
- In plan, consider implementing components of the County Forest Management Plan which establish aesthetic zones, timber harvest buffers, and areas of designated recreational use.

Objective 3

Expand the public land base by seeking to purchase select parcels for resource protection, forest production, and public recreational use. (Forest & Parks)

Action 1 - Develop/purchase rights of first refusal from landowners owning parcels located within the Chippewa County Forest Blocking Boundary.

Action 2 - Develop/purchase rights of first refusal from landowners owning parcels situated adjacent to an existing County park, or other parcels with high value for outdoor recreational use, including those associated with public trail corridors or water access.

5.4 Public Information and Education

The specific educational programming, needed to achieve program objectives, is recognized as the responsibility of the County department pursuing the objective. Each department will be encouraged to seek educational program support, if available, through the Chippewa County Extension Office.

A detailed information and education program will be developed to explain the nonpoint pollution control standards and the local delivery system, which will be used to administer the standards.

6.0 TRACKING AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

6.1 Resource Based Monitoring

A series of land-based resource inventories will be systematically maintained by the County to monitor ongoing land use and existing land cover. These inventories will be reviewed annually as part of the interagency planning process to track land use trends. The inventories, which will be used in this monitoring, include current satellite images and GIS map compilations, showing the locations of new well permits, new subdivisions, zoning changes, and public land acquisitions.

The quality of surface water will be monitored by DNR following a monitoring plan developed by the DNR Western Region. This State effort will be based upon lakes monitoring and wadeable stream monitoring. The wadeable stream monitoring effort will focus on instream habitat, temperature, and macro invertebrates. The planned schedule for water resource surface monitoring in Chippewa County is provided in Table 7. This monitoring will be augmented by routine water quality testing conducted in the Duncan Creek Watershed through a high school water testing program.

The quality of groundwater will be monitored through a series of testing programs and data bases administered by the Department of Natural Resources and by Chippewa County.

6.2 Administrative Tracking

Results of resource based monitoring, conducted by public agencies, will be used to evaluate and assess whether land and water resource objectives defined in Section 4.4 are being met.

Chippewa County has designed and implemented a system of administrative tracking to systematically record and monitor tax parcels where nonpoint pollution control standards have been administered. The County will create a data base and associated map layer as a component of the Chippewa County Geographic Information System (GIS).

The mapping system will have the capability to record, identify, and track the location of tax parcels where agricultural nonpoint standards have been explained, where farm operations and parcels have been evaluated, and where agricultural nonpoint source pollution standards are met.

7.0 YEAR 2004-2010 ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Table 8 is a schedule of activities planned for the five (5) year period from 2004-2009 to accomplish County program objectives. Table 9 is a program budget for the corresponding time period. The budget shows the amount of local tax levy and the amount of State grant funding which are now applied, or are projected to implement selected land use and land conservation activities.