

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Washington County Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan is a long-range planning document intended to guide the activities of the Land and Water Conservation (LWC) Division in its efforts to protect and improve local land and water resources for the next 10 years. This plan represents the next generation of resource management strategies and is an improved and updated guide that builds upon past work in order to help carry out our overall conservation mission. Also recognized throughout this plan are numerous local and regional plans that likewise focus on natural resources. This plan attempts to incorporate or reference related elements of those plans and serves to support the Washington County Comprehensive Plan and the Washington County Strategic Plan. As a result, this plan is intended to complement and coordinate with existing plans rather than replace them.

The LWRM Plan is mandatory for all counties under s. 92.10 Wisconsin Statutes and describes how Washington County will help state agencies meet federal and state clean water goals while addressing other local natural resource issues. This plan also describes the programs and methodology that will be used to ensure the County is implementing Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions to reduce runoff and protect water quality as defined in NR 151 and will help the County qualify for future grants.

Chapter I – Introduction, provides background on LWRM Plans, the public input process and how the activities of the LWC align with the strategic priorities of Washington County. Chapter II – Demographics and Land Use, describes trends in population and land use specifically looking at agricultural land and urban growth. Chapter III – Resource Inventory and Assessment, provides information on the natural resource base of the County, as well as soil and slope analysis, evaluation of the major watersheds, and details on the County’s soil and water resources. Chapter IV – Implementation Strategy, Programs and Priorities, builds off the information presented in this and previous chapters and describes the programs and the work direction opportunities for future conservation efforts. Total Maximum Daily Load plans (TMDL) are introduced in this chapter and they cover 99% of the County; a TMDL is the amount of a pollutant a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. The goals and objectives of the TMDL, along with the goals of other planning efforts and the list of programs highlighted in this chapter are used to group and define objectives and actions for determining measurable work activities in the creation of annual work plans. The overarching goals identified in Chapter VI are listed below:

- Improve and implement planning strategies and programs that protect and preserve land and water resources
- Improve and protect surface and groundwater through the proper use of fertilizers and pesticides
- Reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff from developed and developing areas
- Reduce the human and environmental risks posed by animal waste
- Protect and improve the quality and quantity of groundwater
- Protect and enhance the productivity and sustainability of all cropland and reduce sediment delivery into streams, lakes and wetlands
- Reduce the human and environmental risks posed by hazardous waste

The success of any program relies on an effective information and education program that targets developers, engineers, contractors, municipal staff, farmers, landowners and the general public; the details of these efforts are explained in Chapter V – Information & Education Activities. Chapter VII – Implementation Budget, attempts to capture the current cost of programming and brings to light future shortfalls as well as identifying funding levels to support state mandated cost-sharing requirements to control agricultural pollution. Lastly, Chapter VIII – Evaluation, explains how the LWC will track and monitor the effectiveness of program activities and progress towards improved water quality and natural resource protection efforts.

The Washington County LWRM Plan was written with the assistance of partner agencies, that include staff from: The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, County Health Department, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Metropolitan Builders Association, Riveredge Nature Center, Cedar Lake Conservation Foundation; and Citizen Representatives which together formed the Advisory Committee. Citizen representatives included farmers, educators, lake residents, and local elected officials. Additional public input included in this plan was generated from an agricultural producer survey and a Public Hearing held by the Land Conservation Committee.

This LWRM Plan does not bring light to any “new” resource management issues or represent any shift in county policy or priorities relating to land and water conservation. Rather, it describes how limited county resources will continue to be focused on meeting water quality standards through a wide array of program methods, including education, technical assistance, cost-sharing grants, GIS technology, low-impact development, partnerships with other agencies and organizations, and regulations. To that end, successful implementation of this plan will be contingent on continued funding from all current sources.