

NCWRPC NEWS

The official newsletter of North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC).

Winter 2010, Number 40

Serving: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood counties since 1973.



Director's Note

As we begin a new year, it's time to reflect upon organizational accomplishments, identify areas of improvement, and set priorities for the upcoming year.

Accomplishments cannot be achieved without having a good staff and Board. It is the hard work and dedication of those that help make goals a reality. Some of these goals include reducing our membership charge, completing more local and regional projects, and securing federal and state funding for our communities. In all, over \$2.9 million grant dollars were secured throughout our region. One area that we need to improve is that of communication. Too many times we get the question "what do you do?" We try and mention as many projects as we can in the newsletter, but we need to do more in this area. And finally, our priorities for the upcoming year will be to strive to provide the highest quality planning services at the lowest cost to our members. Some of the program areas that we will be exploring are related to emergency management and sustainability, in addition to our core areas of economic development, geographic information systems, land use, and transportation.

Thank you for your continued support, and you can continue to count on the NCWRPC to provide the best planning assistance available. Our agency has the expertise and local knowledge that are critical to help your communities and the region.

As always, feel free to contact me about anything related to the organization or any planning related questions you may have. I can be reached at 715-849-5510, Extension 304, or at dlawrence@ncwrpc.org.

Dennis Lawrence, AICP
Executive Director

NCWRPC

Your Return on Investment

As budgets become tighter and financial decisions become more difficult, it is useful to conduct a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis, defined here as the value generated for the amount invested via membership. We all do this with our own personal investments, and it is also appropriate to do this in the public realm.

One of our organizational priorities is to bring funding into the region for our member communities. In 2009, the NCWRPC brought over \$2.9 million dollars to the region via state and federal grants. Further ROI analysis shows that every dollar spent on NCWRPC membership returns nearly 14 additional dollars in federal, state and other local dollars for our communities in the region.

Clearly, investing in the NCWRPC provides a significant return on investment!



"Quarterly Quote"

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Aldo Leopold

Commission Meetings:
See our website for future dates and locations
The public is always welcome.

Ice Age Trail in Langlade County

Planning continues for the section of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail that will connect the existing 54 miles of Trail in Langlade County to Marathon County. A similar planning process is underway in Marathon County for a route to connect the existing trail south of Dells of the Eau Claire County Park. The project is a partnership of the National Park Service, DNR, and the Ice Age Trail Alliance; and NCWRPC has been engaged to facilitate the process.

The Ice Age Trail is a footpath that traces the moraines and other landscape features left by the last glacial advance 10-15,000 years ago. The trail was authorized as a National Scenic Trail (NST) by Congress in 1980 and a State Scenic Trail in 1987. When completed, the Ice Age NST will meander over 1,200 miles through some of the finest glacial scenery in Wisconsin. Approximately half of the Trail has been completed. The Ice Age Trail has been a part of the Langlade County landscape since 1976, and runs primarily through forestland from the northwest corner of the county to northeast of the community of Polar.

In 2003, the Corridor Planning Process was initiated to determine a general trail route and actively involve the public in this process. Corridor Planning began with identifying and mapping features of outstanding geologic, biologic, cultural, and scenic significance to the trail, and then defining wide study areas that encompass these features, and within which the trail may be located.

In winter of 2006, three open house meetings were held to provide the public opportunities to comment on two possible trail corridors in Langlade County. The intention is to acquire a 50-1,000 foot trailway for the Ice Age NST. In some areas, more land may be desired to pre-

serve outstanding resource features or accommodate the wishes of the landowner. For landowners who are interested in allowing the Ice Age Trail to pass across their land, the protection can take the form of fee-simple purchase, conservation easements or a handshake agreement. All transactions are only made on a willing-seller basis.

After obtaining public comment, a “corridor of opportunity” was developed that is approximately 3-4 miles wide with possible route options within that corridor.

Since then, one preferred corridor was chosen, and landowners were contacted to identify possible route options within the “corridor of opportunity.” Two more open house meetings were held in the summer of 2009 to obtain public input on the refined trail plans.

The proposed corridor crosses the southern portion of Langlade County

in a northeast to southwest direction, from private forestland in the Town of Polar to the Marathon County line in the Town of Harrison. It follows the rolling terrain of the Almond and Hancock moraines revealing kettle ponds, icewalled lake plains, boulder fields, and tunnel channels formed during the late Wisconsin Glaciation. The proposed corridor was carefully designed to link numerous public lands such as Goto Lake, Rabe Springs, Demlow Springs, and Trout Springs State Fishery Area, Mueller Lake County Park, and the County Gun and Bow Range. The *Ice Age NST Corridor Plan and Environmental Assessment* for Langlade County, which discusses the environmental and sociological effects of the trails development and use, will be completed. It is hoped that the Langlade County Corridor Planning Process can be wrapped up this year.

Additional Ice Age Trail corridor information is available by contacting Mike Agnew, AICP, at 715-849-5510, Extension 307, or email to magnew@ncwrpc.org.



WROC Update

The Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC) is a multi-jurisdictional group led by the NCWRPC and six other regional planning commissions (RPCs). The RPCs assist with coordination mapping services for participating members of WROC. The goal of the consortium is to build and sustain a multi-participant program to acquire digital orthoimagery and elevation data throughout Wisconsin. WROC is planning for a 2010 flight date. The consortium provides several benefits to participants, including: cost savings, specifications and standards support, data sharing between participants, and procurement support.



Acquiring partner funding is moving forward to help cost share local projects. So far USGS, NRCS, and the Forest Service have all contributed funds toward the 2010 project. The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) has also been awarded their grant request of \$700,000 from Homeland Security to help fund a statewide project. We continue to work with state agencies and private businesses to reach our goal of an 18-inch statewide leaf-off 2010 aerial photo project.

In addition, the southwestern part of Wisconsin is beginning a process to acquire accurate topographic mapping data. The Department of Commerce reserved funding for use in the 31-county 2008 flood declaration area. WROC was used as a vehicle to provide an existing program to help make those counties eligible for funding to acquire new data to update floodplain mapping.

Any organization can participate in WROC. For more information about joining the consortium contact Andy Faust, GISP, at 715-849-5510, Extension 305, or email to afaust@ncwrpc.org.



Sustainable Communities

You hear a lot about sustainability and climate change today, and “reducing your carbon footprint.” But what can local governments do to actually put these ideas into practice?

In 2007 Governor Doyle created by executive order the 25x25 Plan, which calls for a community to pledge that 25% of their electricity, heat, and transportation fuels will come from renewable resources by 2025. Wisconsin’s Office of Energy Independence just released, on December 17, 2009, the first round of Plans that were created with state funded Energy Independent Community grants. That first round of 25x25 Plans includes the following pilot communities: Brown County; the Chequamegon Bay region; the cities of Columbus, Evansville, Marshfield, Oconomowoc; a joint plan from the cities of Platteville and Lancaster; the town of Fairfield; and the villages of Osceola, and Spring Green.

Over the past couple years more than 100 local units of government have passed a 25x25 Resolution, which indicates their desire to become more energy independent, and several of those were in the North Central Wisconsin region including Marshfield, Merrill, Rome, Stevens Point, Wausau, and Wisconsin Rapids, as well as the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

In addition to saving the planet, it’s also possible for local governments to save money by reducing their consumption of fossil fuels. The American Planning Association (APA) has issued guidelines on how communities can make themselves more sustainable.

Here are the APA guidelines to help communities implement sustainable practices:

1. Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, and extracted underground metals and minerals.
2. Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufactured substances that can accumulate in Nature.

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Census 2010

Census information affects the numbers of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and the distribution of federal funds.

An accurate count of residents can provide better infrastructure and more services for your community. In fact, the information the census collects is used to determine how more than \$400 billion dollars of federal funding each year is spent on infrastructure and services like: hospitals; job training centers; schools; senior centers; bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects; and emergency services.

Participation is not just important—it is mandatory.

As we move closer to the 2010 U.S. Census, people have asked a variety of questions about it. Here are a few of the common questions that we have received:

Q. What happens if I don't fill out my census form?

A. Although the law makes it a crime not to answer the decennial census (U.S. Census 2010), the American Community Survey (ACS), and other mandatory censuses, and authorizes the courts to impose a fine of up to \$5,000 for failure to respond, the Census Bureau views this approach as a last resort. The Census Bureau will encourage response by explaining the importance of the questions they ask and how the information benefits the community. A census worker may also visit your home to help you fill out the form.

Q. Why is there no "long form" for Census 2010?

A. The "long form" was replaced by an annual mailing of the American Community Survey (ACS). The "long form" was mailed to one in six households during the 2000 U.S. Census, but it was replaced with the ACS. Each year since the 2000 Census re-engineering effort, the ACS has been mailed to three million households to collect the "long form" data. The ACS allows the Census Bureau to mail only "short forms" for the 2010 U.S. Census, while providing a more timely and accurate social and economic picture of each community.

Census Timeline

March 2010 – Census forms are mailed or delivered.

April 1, 2010 – **National Census Day.**

April–July 2010 – Census takers visit households that did not return a form by mail.

December 2010 – Census Bureau delivers population information to the President for apportionment.

March 2011 – Census Bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to states.

United States®
Census
2010

Anyone with additional Census questions should contact Andy Faust, GISP, at 715-849-5510, Extension 305, or email at afaust@ncwrpc.org.



Redistricting Process

Redistricting is the redrawing of area boundaries from which people elect representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives, state legislature, and a variety of local governing bodies. Public Law 94-171 requires that the redistricting data must be delivered to state officials responsible for legislative redistricting within one year of Census day, or no later than April 1, 2011. These boundaries are redrawn every 10 years based on census population counts to create equal representation for each district. As populations within counties change or shift, the boundaries of election districts will need to follow to provide equal representation.

In the spring of 2011, counties will prepare for redistricting. Most counties form a committee to perform this work. In 2000, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission assisted many counties in the region with this process.

Any counties that would like assistance with the redistricting process should contact Andy Faust, GISP, at 715-849-5510, Extension 305, or email at afaust@ncwrpc.org.



NCWDC Loan Fund

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation recently approved two loans to **Sew Pieceful Quilting** in Tomahawk; a micro-loan, and a façade improvement loan. This is the first loan awarded from the micro-loan program, and the first loan awarded from the façade improvement loan program. Sew Pieceful Quilting is located in downtown Tomahawk at 118 W Wisconsin Avenue and sells sewing and quilting materials and accessories.



The Community Development Loan Fund was established in 2008 to promote job creation and economic growth in North Central Wisconsin. The loan fund is an economic development tool that provides financing to fill gaps in the local markets and to stimulate private sector capital formations.

The loan fund has three separate programs intended to promote economic growth in the region:

1. The Central Business District Façade Improvement Loan was designed to leverage private investment in central business district properties by offering loans to improve building façades (i.e.: complete tuck pointing and brick restoration, awning repair or restoration, install signage, and façade painting). To be eligible for the façade improvements a municipality must complete an application with NCWDC to delineate the central business district.
2. The Micro-loan program is designed for early stage businesses, to provide money for acquisition of fixed capital, working capital, and for marketing materials.
3. The Job Creation and Retention loan provides gap financing to new or expanding businesses.

For more information on the Community Development Loan Fund please contact Matt Schreiber at 715-849-5510, Extension 306, or at mschreiber@ncwrpc.org.



NCWRPC Secures \$529,000 from Commerce

NCWRPC identified and prepared the application that resulted in a \$529,000 grant award from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce to Juneau County. This grant will be used to construct the \$3.7 million Community Center in Mauston. The Community Center is planned as a multi-purpose facility that will have a large room with a projected capacity of 400 people, and will primarily be used for weddings, banquets, events, expos, trade shows, and the County Fair.



Juneau County Agricultural, Industrial and Recreational Society (JCAIRS) is a local non-profit organization that has an agreement with the city and the county to develop and manage the community center. JCAIRS is currently undertaking fundraising efforts to raise the money needed to complete the project.

Grant preparation assistance is one of many services NCWRPC provides to our Member communities. For questions regarding grant assistance please contact Matt Schreiber at 715-849-5510, Extension 306, or at mschreiber@ncwrpc.org.



Sustainable Communities

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- 3. Reduce dependence on activities that harm life-sustaining ecosystems.
- 4. Meet the hierarchy of present and future human needs fairly and efficiently.

If you would like more information about 25x25 Resolutions, how a local government can become more energy independent, and how to access Energy Independent Community grant funding contact: Matt Schreiber at 715-849-5510, Extension 306, or at mschreiber@ncwrpc.org; or Fred Heider, AICP at 715-849-5510, Extension 310, or at fheider@ncwrpc.org.



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