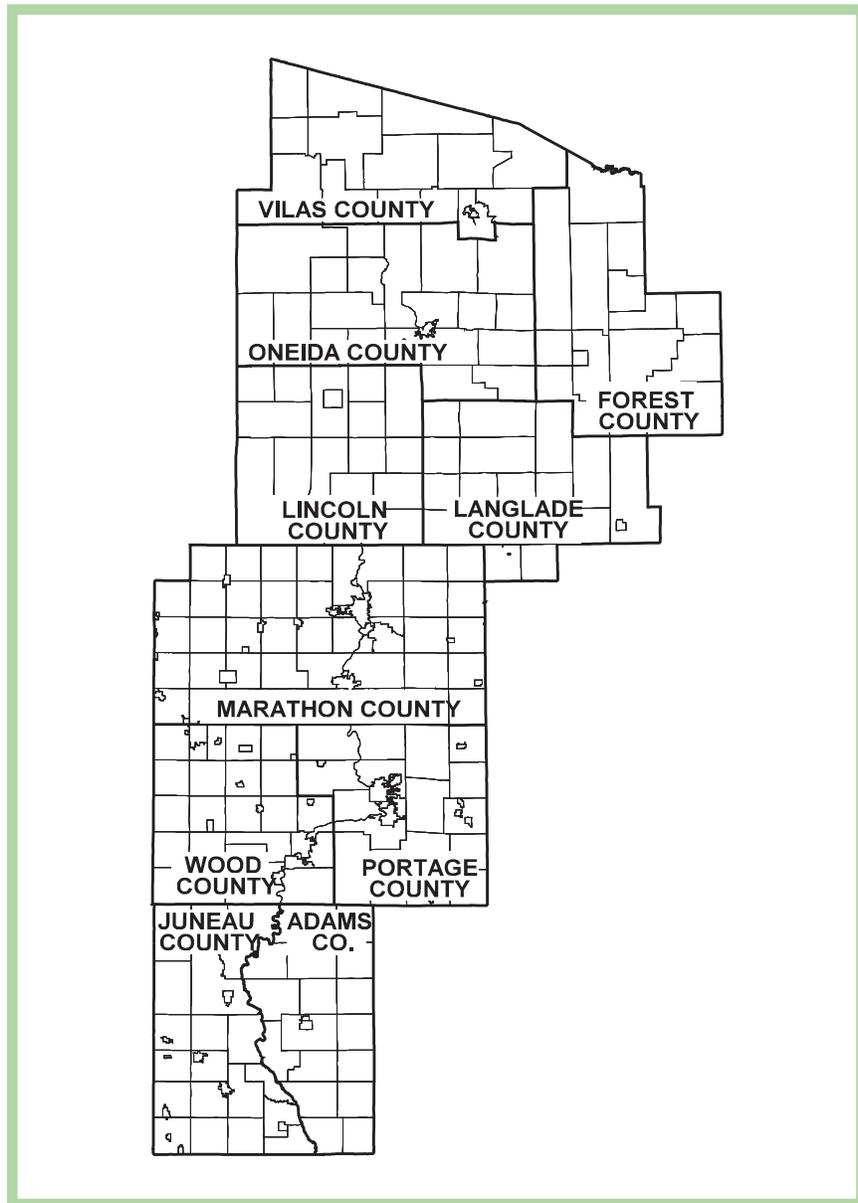




2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**North Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission**



REGIONAL FACTS:

2020 Population (DOA Estimate): 448,322
Square Miles: 9,325

Counties: 10
Cities: 22
Villages: 41
Towns: 196
Tribal: 4

Total Governmental & Tribal Units: 273

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

210 McClellan Street, Suite 210, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403
Telephone: (715) 849-5510 Fax: (715) 849-5110
Web Page: www.ncwrpc.org Email: staff@ncwrpc.org



SERVING ADAMS, FOREST, JUNEAU, LANGLADE, LINCOLN, MARATHON, ONEIDA, PORTAGE, VILAS AND WOOD COUNTIES

Dear North Central Wisconsin:

It is our pleasure to present the **2020 Annual Report** for the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). Throughout the *Annual Report* you will see many regional and local level projects we completed this past year.

As we all know, 2020 was unlike any other year. There was a worldwide health crisis and a resulting economic disruption, but we persevered. During much of the year we shifted to a remote work environment and many of the accomplishments identified in this report were completed during this very challenging period.

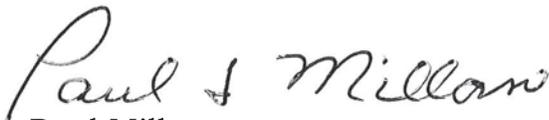
The *Annual Report* is prepared to provide interested local, state, and federal officials as well as citizens with an overview of the activities undertaken by the NCWRPC over the last year. The report highlights our five core work areas:

- Economic Development,
- Geographic Information Systems,
- Intergovernmental Cooperation,
- Land Use, and
- Transportation.

In addition, the report meets the requirements as outlined in Wisconsin Statute 66.0309(8)(b) for annual report preparation. This is our 47th *Annual Report*.

With your continued support, we look forward to another successful year in 2021. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions regarding the *Annual Report*.

Respectfully Submitted,

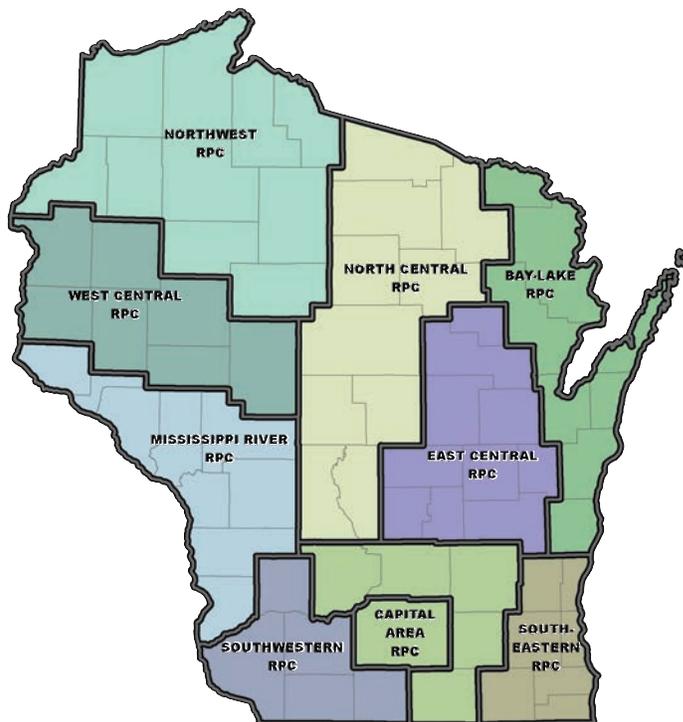

Paul Millan
Chairperson


Dennis Lawrence, AICP, EDFP
Executive Director

PURPOSE AND HISTORY

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) was created in 1973 under Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 as a voluntary association of governments for the purpose of preparing plans for the physical development of the Region and its communities; to conduct research; to serve as a data center; and serve as a forum for communication, cooperation and coordination among federal, state, regional, and local interests; and to provide technical services to its membership.

Regional planning commissions provide assistance throughout the state. NCWRPC is one of nine regional planning commissions in Wisconsin; while nationwide there are about 500 similar type regional organizations.



MISSION STATEMENT:

In an advisory capacity to local units of government and tribes, the NCWRPC offers cost-effective, specialized planning services and expertise that support responsible development of the Region's economic, social, natural, and human-built environments. The NCWRPC also provides leadership and a regional forum for the creation of cooperative responses to shared opportunities and the challenges facing the counties and communities of the ten-county Region.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

NCWRPC is a regional planning and economic development agency, which provides assistance to local governments throughout the ten-county Region in the areas of economic development, geographic information systems (GIS), intergovernmental cooperation, land use planning, and transportation. The NCWRPC supplements existing staff, or takes the lead where there is no staff. The goal is to not duplicate efforts but rather provide an effective system of planning to fit each community's need.

The NCWRPC undertakes both regional and local planning projects. Regional Accomplishments are highlighted on page 7 and Local Assistance projects are highlighted by county on pages 9 through 11.

STATE AND FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS

NCWRPC is an independent area-wide planning agency created by state statute that is governed by an appointed board, called a Commission, and serves the counties, towns, villages, cities, and tribes within the Region. In addition, there are two long-standing relationships with the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and the federal U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), that support planning.

In 1975, NCWRPC was designated as a rural transportation planning region by the WisDOT. As such, the NCWRPC receives a planning grant annually to provide transportation planning assistance to support the state transportation work program throughout the region. Since 1980 the NCWRPC has maintained EDA designation as an economic development district. As such, the NCWRPC receives an annual economic development planning grant to provide local economic development assistance and prepare a regional report called a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); which maintains eligibility for various EDA grants for active members.

PUBLICATIONS

Annually the NCWRPC prepares and publishes several planning documents. The NCWRPC also published a quarterly newsletter, NCWRPC NEWS, which is sent to over 1,100 people, including county supervisors, chief-elected officials, clerks and many other interested parties throughout the region, state, and nation. A list of plans, reports and other information is available at the NCWRPC website. See www.ncwrpc.org.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

NCWRPC maintains and regularly updates a Strategic Plan, as well as other related plans. Some of the goals from these plans are to:

- ✓ Provide cost-effective planning services to our members,
- ✓ Leverage state and federal dollars for the region,
- ✓ Communicate benefits of regional and local planning,
- ✓ Advance sustainable growth and development of the region, and
- ✓ Help communities identify strategies and solutions to planning issues and challenges facing them.

NCWRPC PROVIDES MEMBERS WITH ASSISTANCE IN THE FOLLOWING FIVE AREAS:

ED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NCWRPC annually prepares a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that analyzes the economy and identifies potential economic development projects. This report maintains the Region's eligibility for U.S.

Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration public works programs. Other federal and state programs utilize this plan as well. NCWRPC also prepares EDA grant applications, among others, to bring funding into the Region.

NCWRPC provides local communities with assistance in a variety of other economic development related studies, including preparing detailed economic development plans that examine the local economy, assess local trends, and identify strategies to spur development. In addition, the NCWRPC provides grant writing and administrative assistance to communities that are seeking funds from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, as well as a variety of other grant programs including WEDC, DNR, WisDOT, and USDA-Rural Development.

GIS GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

NCWRPC is a depository for a variety of demographic information for the area, including U.S. Census, American Community Survey, Economic Census, State Employment and Labor Information, and other specialized data sets.

We maintain a Regional GIS database and computerized mapping system, including digital orthophotography. In addition, we assist with preparing County Land Information Plans and various grant applications for digital imagery. NCWRPC also coordinates efforts related to securing regional and statewide ariel imagery.

NCWRPC maintains an extensive digital mapping database for the local mapping. Custom data sets and maps can also be created for communities on request or as part of larger planning efforts. County Profiles are also prepared and updated as needed. Also, in partnership with WEDC, NCWRPC prepares quarterly economic development reports for each county in the Region using EMSI, specialized economic development analysis software. In addition, the NCWRPC provides redistricting assistance throughout the Region.

IGOV

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

NCWRPC is available to conduct specialized studies on request. Over the years, a wide range of studies have been completed on subjects such as merging ambulance services, community consolidation, economic impact analysis, and boundary agreements. Many of these projects include a regional focus because they involve multiple units of government. In addition, the NCWRPC maintains a website and produces a regular newsletter to provide information and other resources.

LU

LAND USE

NCWRPC is responsible for the development of a regional comprehensive plan for the ten-county Region. The Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2004, the first regional comprehensive plan in the state under the new planning law, and was last updated in 2015. The mid-plan review of that document will be developed in 2020. NCWRPC also prepares other regionally focused plans from time to time.

NCWRPC prepares a variety of plans for local communities, including outdoor recreation plans, all hazard mitigation plans, land and water resource management plans, sewer service area plans, wellhead protection plans, and wildfire protection plans, among others. In addition, the NCWRPC assists local governments in the preparation of comprehensive plans under Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, as well as assistance with zoning and land division ordinances that implement local plans.

TR

TRANSPORTATION

NCWRPC prepares regional transportation plans including highway corridor studies, long-range urban area plans, parking studies, county-wide bicycle planning, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans, and grant writing for various WisDOT funding sources. The NCWRPC also provides on-going assistance to the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

NCWRPC assists local governments in a variety of areas, including the preparation of local road improvement programs. These road plans provide a capital improvement schedule for upgrading local roads and help local units obtain Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) funding for road reconstruction projects. Pavement rating and other assistance with the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program is also available.

REGIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2020

NCWRPC prepares, undertakes and manages several regional efforts. Below are some of the highlights of these efforts:

- Secured CARES Act funding for the organization to prepare a Regional Recovery Plan, as well as for other efforts within the region to assist in the recovery process.
- Provided technical assistance to several communities considering pursuing funding through the EDA CARES Act grant program.
- Prepared and maintained a substantial COVID-19 Recovery page on our website to provide information to both businesses and local governments.
- Secured approximately \$200,000 through state and federal grants to reduce overall costs for county and local projects related to air photo acquisition in our region, as part of the WROC effort.
- Prepared the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report to maintain the Region's Economic Development District designation, as defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).
- Completed implementation of a multiyear regional Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to improve walking and biking conditions for 25 schools in eleven different school districts throughout the Region. Prepared regional SRTS summary document.
- Maintained and developed a Regional Mapping Information System, Census and Demographic Information, and a Planning Library for the Region.
- Continued a partnership with WEDC to provide EMSI economic development modeling tools to communities within the Region. Prepared regional reports.
- Provided region-wide assistance to the US Census Bureau related to demographics and mapping for the Census and subsequent redistricting.
- Working with North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board prepared a regional labor force study.
- Continued implementation of our Regional Bike Plan, which stems from our Regional Livability Plan, as a framework for county and local level bike and pedestrian planning efforts. Two community plans were prepared.
- Maintained designation as a rural transportation planning region by WisDOT to coordinate transportation strategies on a regional basis, as well as assist local governments prepare and submit required road ratings.
- Provide organizational support to various entities within the region, including: NCWDC, NEWCOM, NCWSC, Centergy, NRTC, and WROC.

NCWRPC is involved in various other regional efforts throughout the year that are not mentioned here.

ON-GOING REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

► **North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC)**

Provide management assistance for a revolving loan fund operated by the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation, which provides gap financing to businesses throughout the Region. The Regional Development Fund has recently been de-federalized, with the goal of increasing jobs and expanding the local tax base within the Region.

► **North East Wisconsin Public Safety Communication (NEWCOM)**

Provide staff support to NEWCOM to manage and coordinate the organization to promote better emergency service communication throughout a 16 county Region.

► **North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition (NCWSC)**

Provide staff support to the NCSWC. The North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition is a group of 13 municipalities that coordinate education and outreach efforts to improve water quality in the Central Wisconsin River watershed.

► **Centergy**

Provide staff support to Centergy a regional economic development organization serving Adams, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage and Wood Counties. Centergy strives to leverage the collective economic power of its five counties to unite efforts to attract talent and development to the area.

► **Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC)**

Provide staff assistance to the NRTC. The mission of the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission is to sustain and enhance safe, reliable, and efficient rail service critical to the businesses, communities and economies in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

► **Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC)**

Began as a regional effort in 2005 and now spans the entire state of Wisconsin. This is a collaborative effort to gather orthoimagery for various applications from addressing to 911 to planning. The effort is conducted every five years and covers over 56,000 square miles of aerial imagery. A variety of state and federal partners are involved in this effort as well as over 100 local units of government.

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY COUNTY 2020

Reflected below are projects completed or underway within our nine full county member counties. Wood County is a new member for 2020.

ADAMS COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ✓ Town of Quincy Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ Maintain Online County Records System
- ✓ State Parcel Submission assistance to DOA per state statute
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ City of Adams Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ 2020 Land Use Coverage Update
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

FOREST COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ✓ Forest County Potawatomi Bike & Pedestrian Plan underway
- ✓ State Parcel Submission assistance to DOA per state statutes
- ✓ Regional Economic Development Loan to Local Business
- ✓ Town of Lincoln Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ County GIS & Parcel Mapping Assistance
- ✓ Wabeno Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ Mole Lake Tribal Mitigation Planning Grant
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

JUNEAU COUNTY

- ✓ City of New Lisbon Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ JCEDC Sales Tax Data Assistance
- ✓ Juneau County Health Assessment Assistance
- ✓ Mauston Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ Town of Armenia Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ City of Elroy Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

LANGLADE COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ✓ City of Antigo EDA Public Works Grant Application
- ✓ Elcho Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ Prepared Antigo Fire Department Maps
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ County Land Records and GIS Assistance
- ✓ Maintain Online County Records System
- ✓ White Lake Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ State Parcel Submission assistance to DOA per state statutes
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

Staff also attends various meetings, responds to inquiries, provides assistance to a variety of departments, agencies, and organizations, and completes numerous projects throughout the region not mentioned above.

LINCOLN COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant
- ✓ Merrill Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ City of Tomahawk Outdoor Recreation plan
- ✓ County Comprehensive Plan Update Assistance
- ✓ City of Tomahawk Bike & Pedestrian Plan DOT TAP Grant Application
- ✓ Town of Russell Road Survey Management Plan underway
- ✓ 2020 Land Use Coverage Update
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

MARATHON COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant
- ✓ Village of Rothschild Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ City of Mosinee Interactive on-line Zoning Map
- ✓ County DOT 5304 Planning Grant
- ✓ Town of Rib Mountain Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Village of Kronenwetter Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ Village of Weston Housing Affordability Report Update
- ✓ Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

ONEIDA COUNTY

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant
- ✓ Town of Newbold Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ City of Rhinelander Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
- ✓ Maintain Online County Survey Records System
- ✓ 2020 Land Use Coverage Update
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

VILAS COUNTY

- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey
- ✓ Town of Conover Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ Town of Land O Lakes Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Town of Winchester Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ Town of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ 2020 Land Use Coverage Update
- ✓ Lac du Flambeau Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS) underway
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

WOOD COUNTY

- ✓ County Bike & Pedestrian Plan DOT TAP Grant Application
- ✓ County REDI Plan Assistance
- ✓ Nekoosa Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS)
- ✓ Wisconsin Rapids EDA CARES Act grant application
- ✓ Verso Mill Closure Economic Impact Reports
- ✓ Marshfield Sewer Service Area Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports

Wood County Joins NCWRPC!

The county board of supervisors took action to join the NCWRPC in 2020 to become our newest member. As part of county membership all local units are automatically members as well. We look forward to many successful outcomes resulting from this collaborate relationship. Working together we all achieve more!

AUDITED 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Each year the NCWRPC engages an independent auditor to provide an examination of financial operations. A copy of the complete 2020 Audit Report and Management Communications Letter is available for review at the NCWRPC Office. Below is the December 31, 2020 Statement of Net Position:

ASSETS:	
Current Assets	1,701,051
Noncurrent Assets	5,050
Other Assets-Net Pension	79,915
Capital Assets	<u>7,724</u>
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$2,254,510
TOTAL DEFERRED OUTFLOWS:	\$219,402
LIABILITIES:	
Current Liabilities	294,046
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>172,373</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES:	\$466,419
TOTAL DEFERRED INFLOWS:	\$551,836
Net Invested Capital Assets	7,724
Restricted	79,915
Unrestricted	<u>1,368,018</u>
TOTAL NET POSITION:	<u>\$1,455,657</u>

ANNUAL LEVY RATE

By state statute the membership charge or levy rate to local governments cannot exceed 0.003% of equalized real estate value. The rate was set at 0.00275% in 2000 and has been reduced multiple times since. By 2020 that rate was reduced to 0.000851%, which is well less than one third of the statutory limit! In addition, to level out the wide range of valuations of our member counties, the NCWRPC established a cap. The NCWRPC continually seeks other revenue sources to minimize costs to our members.

LEVERAGING FUNDS

To keep membership contributions low, additional funds are secured from other sources to operate the organization. A simple Return on Membership (ROM) analysis shows that every membership dollar provided to the NCWRPC leverages additional dollars. In 2020, for every 1 dollar the NCWRPC received from membership it directly leveraged over 5 dollars from grants, local projects, and other sources.

The NCWRPC with the support of its counties, area economic development corporations, private lenders, and others, established the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC). The NCWDC is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, staffed by the NCWRPC, to manage economic development loan funds. The NCWDC has made over 20 loans and created or retained over 445 jobs in the Region.

The NCWDC Board recently took action to de-federalize and consolidate the two current funds into one fund. Two funds managed were de-federalized and merged into one fund in 2019, there was only one active loan in the portfolio during this period. A revised loan manual and application form is being prepared for the new fund. Total Assets of the fund, as of December 31, 2020, are \$483,980.

The new fund is now called the **Regional Development Fund**. An eleven-member Board of Directors provides oversight to the NCWDC, which includes one person from each of the counties in the Region, along with one representative from the NCWRPC. Board of Directors listed is current as of December 31, 2020:

Adams County	Daric Smith
Forest County	Bev Collins, President
Juneau County	Terry Whipple
Langlade County	Angie Close, Vice - President
Lincoln County	Bill Bialecki
Marathon County	Vicki Ruesch
Oneida County	Zach Vruwink
Portage County	Todd Kuckkahn
Vilas County	Kathy Schmidt
Wood County	Jason Grueneberg
NCWRPC	Craig McEwen, Secretary - Treasurer

In addition, there is a five-person Loan Review Committee that reviews and makes the final funding decision on each loan application. Current members are: Bill Bialecki, Angie Close, Bev Collins, and Dan Daubert. One position is vacant.

STAFF

Carrie Edmondson, Planner

Carrie started work with the NCWRPC in 2018. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Arizona State University and a master's degree in public administration from California State University, Fullerton. Carrie works in the areas of community development, land use, and transportation.

Andrew Faust, GISP, Senior GIS Analyst

Andy has worked with the NCWRPC since 1995. He has a bachelor's degree in urban and regional studies from UW-Oshkosh. He is also certified as a Geographic Information System Professional (GISP). Andy works in the areas of GIS and land use.

Fredrick Heider, AICP, Planner

Fred has worked with the NCWRPC since 2004. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources and land use from UW-Stevens Point and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Fred works mainly in the areas of land use and transportation.

Darryl Landeau, AICP, Senior Planner

Darryl has worked with the NCWRPC since 1993. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources from UW-Stevens Point and a master's degree in urban studies from Mankato State University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Darryl works mainly in the areas of land use and transportation.

Dennis Lawrence, EDFP, AICP, Executive Director

Dennis has worked with the NCWRPC since 1992 and became the Executive Director in 1997. He has a bachelor's degree in public administration from UW-La Crosse and a master's degree in urban planning from UW-Milwaukee. He is certified as an Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP) and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Dennis provides overall management to the organization and works in all areas of planning.

Eric Sonnleitner, Planner

Eric has worked with the NCWRPC since 2017. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources and land use from UW-Stevens Point. Eric works mainly in the areas of community development, land use, transportation, and GIS.

Pam Winkels, Office Assistant

Pam has worked with the NCWRPC since 2015. She has a bachelor's degree in graphic communications from St. Norbert's. Pam provides program support, staff support, and general office assistance.

COMMISSIONERS

An appointed commission oversees the activities of the executive director and the organization. As detailed in Wisconsin statutes, three commissioners from each member county govern the NCWRPC. One is selected directly by the County (C), one directly by the Governor (G), and the third is a Joint (J) selection between the County and Governor. Term ending is also displayed; however, note that all serve until reappointed or replaced. Commissioners listed are current as of December 31, 2020.

NCWRPC officers are Paul Millan, Chairperson; Loretta Baughan, Vice-Chairperson; and Edmund Wafle, Secretary – Treasurer.

Adams County

Rocky Gilner, C (6/24)
Appointment Pending, G (6/22)
Rick Pease, J (6/26)

Forest County

Bill Chaney, C (1/26)
Paul Millan, G (1/24)
Cindy Gretzinger, J (1/22)

Juneau County

Edmund Wafle, C (6/25)
Kenneth Winters, G (6/23)
Jerry Niles, J (6/21)

Langlade County

Ronald Nye, C (1/25)
Angela Close, G (1/22)
Reinhardt Balcerzak, J (1/25)

Lincoln County

Paul Gilk, C (6/22)
Loretta Baughan, G (6/21)
Vacant, J (6/23)

Marathon County

Catherine Wineman, C (6/21)
Daniel Guild, G (6/23)
Craig McEwen, J (6/25)

Oneida County

Thomas Rudolph, C (1/26)
Ted Cushing, G (1/22)
Harland Lee, J (1/24)

Portage County

None Participating

Vilas County

Robert Hanson, C (6/25)
Jay Verhulst, G (1/23)
Vacant, J (1/21)

Wood County

Gerald Nelson, C (6/23)
Doug Machon, G (6/21)
Dave LaFontaine, J (6/25)

In addition, per Wisconsin Statute, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) - Missy Hughes - is an ex-officio officer of the NCWRPC.



NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

47th Annual Report

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Phone: (715) 849-5510 • Fax: (715) 849-5110

Website: www.ncwrpc.org