Chapter 2: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

This chapter describes local land and water conditions in detail as well as agricultural resources and cultural heritage. It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale because they do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the county, state, or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Of particular interest are geographic areas of the landscape encompassing valued natural resource features grouped below by resource type, including soil and biological resources.

PREVIOUS NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCE PLANS AND STUDIES

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by Wood County specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used as resources to guide local policy and decision-making regarding resource management and protection.

Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2015
This plan provides a framework for local/state/federal conservation program implementation efforts. This plan aims to protect valuable water and soil resources within Wood County. The plan identifies eight goals including improving surface water quality, reducing crop damage, protection of wetlands, increase water inventory efforts, minimizing urban sprawl and land fragmentation in rural areas, improving air quality, and improving woodlands.

Wood County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan, 2018
The primary focus of this recreation plan is to protect and promote the health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the community and to provide a quality county-wide recreation system. The plan aims to guide and coordinate a harmonious county recreation system and provides direction for recreation management and policy. This includes direction for short and long-term community recreation decisions, an inventory of existing recreation systems and services, and a practical action program for future improvements. This plan is soon to be updated.

There are also a variety of other county plans related, such as the Soil Survey of Wood County, Wood County Soil Erosion Plan, and County Floodplain, Shoreland, & General Zoning Codes. There are also some state related documents as well, such as the Department of Natural Resources Legacy Report and various Water Resources Basin plans.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Examining the natural environment is essential to the planning process. For instance, soils, topography and geology can pose limitations to certain types of development, while an inventory of surface water resources, vegetation types, environmentally significant areas, and historical features identify those resources and areas which should be protected from over-development. This section of the plan identifies both the land and water resources of the town.

Land Resources

The Town of Saratoga is located in southeastern Wood County, Wisconsin. The Town is bounded by the Town of Grand Rapids and Village of Port Edwards to the north, the Town of Grant (Portage County) to the east, the Town of Rome (Adams County) to the south and the Town of Port Edwards and City of Nekoosa to the west.

Topography and Geology

Wood County lies in two geographic provinces in Wisconsin. The northern one-third is part of the Northern Highland, and the rest of the county is part of the Central Plain according to the Soil Survey of Wood County. The Town of Saratoga lies within the Central Plain geographic province.

In general, the Northern Highland region has underlying bedrock that consists of Precambrian crystalline rocks. Over the bedrock there is a layer of loamy residuum weathered from Precambrian rock. The western half of this region has a mantle of heavy loam glacial till over bedrock, while the rest of this region has, over the bedrock, a layer that varies in thickness; this layer is loamy residuum weather from Precambrian rock. A two feet thick layer of wind-deposited silt cover the entire region.

The central plain region has underlying bedrock that consists of Cambrian sandstone interbedded with varying amounts of shale. These shale layers are thick and very prominent in the western part of the county. Glacial till covers the sandstone and shale in the northwestern part of the county and on a few broad, low ridges south of Powers Bluff, but the rest of the Central Plain in Wood County is residual. One to two feet of loess cover the entire region except the lake plain and outwash parts.

Soils

In Wood County, if a line were drawn east and west approximately through Wisconsin Rapids, it would roughly separate the loamy soils north of the line from the sandy soils south of the line. Most of the soils in the southern part of the county formed in sandy material deposited by glacial melt waters along the Wisconsin River or in Glacial Lake Wisconsin.

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service has grouped the soils of Wood County into eleven major soil associations. The most prevalent soil group, covering most of the Town of Saratoga, is the Plainfield – Friendship Association. The soils of this association are on outwash plains on either side of the Wisconsin River and extend from the vicinity of Wisconsin Rapids southward. See the Natural Resources Map.

Forests

Woodlands and forests cover about 25,500 acres, or approximately 78 percent of the Town. Forests play a key role in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. Expansive forests provide recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, and economic development. All forests are dynamic, always changing from one stage to another, influenced by natural forces and human behavior. Changes can be subtle and occur over long period or can happen in shorts spans of time from activities such as timber harvest, a windstorm, or a fire. Aspen, pines, and oaks dominate area woodlands.

Metallic and Non-Metallic Mining

Mineral resources are divided into two categories, metallic and non-metallic resources. Metallic resources include lead and zinc. Non-metallic resources include sand, gravel, and limestone. There are no known metallic deposits and there are no permitted non-metallic mines currently in operation in the Town.

Environmentally Remediated Areas

Brownfields are commercial or industrial properties that contain or may contain hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. Expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of these properties can be especially difficult. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) is an online database that provides information about contaminated properties and other activities related to the investigation and clean-up of properties with contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Contaminated sites are not uncommon as all communities with commercial and industrial development have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. Contaminated sites originate when a property is used for such activities as a gas station, industrial processing facility, a landfill, or a laundromat. There are no listed open sites on the BRRTS currently in the Town of Saratoga.

Rare Species and Natural Communities

Wisconsin's National Heritage Inventory Program (NHI) is responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the State. The program's database, on the Wisconsin DNR website, identifies species and natural communities that are currently tracked by the NHI. As of October 2021, NHI tracked seventeen species or communities in the Town of Saratoga, as shown in **Table 9**.

Table 9: Rare Species & Natural Communities			
Species Name	**WI Status**	**Federal Status**	**Group**
Dusted Skipper	SC/N		Butterfly
Red-Shouldered Hawk	THR		Bird
Field Dodder	SC/N		Plant
Blanding's Turtle	SC/P	SOC	Turtle
Persius Dusky Wing	SC/N		Butterfly
Floodplain Forest	NA		Community
Karner Blue	SC/FL	LE	Butterfly
Redfin Shiner	THR		Fish
Northern Wet Forest	NA		Community
Sioux (Sand) Snaketail	SC/N		Dragonfly
Vasey's Pondweed	SC		Plant
Alder Thicket	NA		Community
Missouri Rock-cress	SC		Plant
Central Sands Pine-Oak Forest	NA		Community
Wood Turtle	THR	SOC	Turtle
Northern Dry-mesic Forest	NA		Community
Stream--Slow, Hard, Cold	NA		Community

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory

WI Status Codes:
SC – Special Concern
SC/N – Special Concern with no laws regulating use, possession or harvesting.
THR – Threated and legally protected
SC/P – Special concern and fully protected
SC/FL – Federally protected, but not state designated
NA – Not Applicable

Federal Status Codes:
SOC – Species of Concern
LE – Listed Endangered

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society.

Water Resources

The Town of Saratoga, as well as the whole of Wood County, contains an assortment of natural surface water features, including creeks and wetlands. This section discusses the characteristics of the major surface water features located within the Town.

Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land in which water drains to a common point. In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas and typically range in size from 100 to 300 square miles. River basins encompass several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin, which range in size from 500 to over 5,000 square miles.

The Town of Saratoga is included within four watersheds. The northern portion of the Town is located within the Fourmile and Fivemile Creek watershed, the central portion of the Town lies within the Sevenmile and Tenmile Creeks watershed, the southern portion of the Town lies within the Fourteenmile Creek watershed, and the western edge of the Town lies within the Wisconsin Rapids watershed. See the Natural Resources Map.

Wood County Shoreland Zoning is in effect. The County has authority over lands 300 feet from a river or stream and 1,000 feet from a lake. Actual shoreland jurisdiction measurements are coordinated through the County Planning and Zoning Department.

Surface Water

Surface water resources, consisting of rivers and streams together with associated floodplains, form an integral element of the natural resource base of the Town of Saratoga. Surface water resources influence the physical development of an area, provide recreational opportunities, and enhance the aesthetic quality of the area. Rivers and streams constitute focal points of water related recreational activities; provide an attractive setting for properly planned residential development; and, when viewed in context of the total landscape, greatly enhance the aesthetic quality of the environment.

There are an assortment of rivers and streams that flow through the Town of Saratoga. The Wisconsin River forms the Town's western boundary with the City of Nekoosa and Town of Port Edwards. Other perennial streams within the Town include Harvey Creek, Five Mile Creek, Seven Mile Creek, and Ten Mile Creek. In addition, there are several shallow water resources in the western and northwestern portions of the Town that are an integral part of the local cranberry economy.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

The Wisconsin DNR classifies major surface water resources. These classifications allow water bodies of particular importance to be identified because of their unique resource values and water quality. The DNR has two categories including Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) which have the highest quality water and fisheries in the state deserving of special protection, and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) which have excellent water quality and valued fisheries.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics. The primary difference between the two is that ORWs typically do not have any direct point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water. In addition, any pollutant load discharged to an ORW must meet background water quality at all times. Exceptions are made for certain types of discharge situations to ERWs to allow pollutant loads that are greater than background water quality when human health would otherwise be compromised. Bloody Run Creek, Fivemile Creek, and Sevenmile Creek are all listed as Exceptional Resource Waters within the Town of Saratoga. There are no waterbodies listed as an Outstanding Resource Water within the Town.

Impaired Waters

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the "303(d) list." A water body is considered impaired if a) the current water quality does not meet the numeric or narrative criteria in a water quality standard or b) the designated use that is described in Wisconsin Administrative Code is not being achieved. A documented methodology is used to articulate the approach used to list waters in Wisconsin. Every two years, states are required to submit a list of impaired waters to EPA for approval.

The Wisconsin River is the only waterbody within the Town of Saratoga listed as an impaired waterbody. As such, the Wisconsin River continues to be monitored by the Wisconsin DNR

Invasive Aquatic Species

Surface water resources in Wood County are threatened by the introduction of invasive aquatic species. Invasive species can alter the natural ecological relationships among native species and affect ecosystem function, economic value of ecosystems, and human health. It is recommended that the Town continue to work with the Wood County Land and Water Conservation Department to develop public outreach education strategies.

Wetland

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In terms of hazard mitigation, they act as water storage devices in times of high water. Like sponges, wetlands are able to absorb excess water and release it back into the watershed slowly, preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly

Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Calm wetland waters, with their flat surface and flow characteristics, allow particles of toxins and nutrients to settle out of the water column. Plants take up certain nutrients from the water. Other substances can be stored or transformed to a less toxic state within wetlands. As a result, the lakes, rivers and streams are cleaner. See the **Natural Resources Map**.

Wetlands that filter or store sediments or nutrients for extended periods may undergo fundamental changes. Sediments will eventually fill in wetlands and nutrients will eventually modify the vegetation. Such changes may result in the loss of this function over time. Eradication of wetlands can occur through the use of fill material. This can destroy the hydrological function of the site and open the area to improper development. The DNR has promulgated minimum standards for managing wetlands.

Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year. The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Floodplains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the most substantial (regional) flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years. Due to the nature of the geography and hydrology of the area, floodplain

mapping is also known to have accuracy issues in this area. The presence and exact location of floodplains must be verified by field survey, and applicable permits obtained prior to any land disturbing activity.

Groundwater

Groundwater is water the occupies void spaces between soil particles or cracks in the rock below the land surface. It originates as precipitation that infiltrated the ground. The type of soil and bedrock that a well is drilled into often determines the pH, saturation index, and the amount of hardness or alkalinity in water. The type of soil and bedrock in a region also determines how quickly contaminants can reach groundwater.

The source of all drinking water in Wood County is groundwater, and it supplies many agricultural and industrial processes as well. Groundwater is a limited resource, and both its quality and quantity are important factors. These factors are primarily influenced by local geology and local land use. Groundwater in Wood County is generally abundant and of good quality.

Susceptibility of groundwater to pollutants is defined here as the ease with which a contaminant can be transported from the land surface to the top of the groundwater called the water table. Many materials that overlie the groundwater offer good protection from contaminants that might be transported by infiltrating waters. The amount of protection offered by the overlying material varies, however, depending on the materials. Thus, in some areas, the overlying soil and bedrock materials allow contaminants to reach the groundwater more easily than in other areas of the state. According to the Wisconsin DNR, the Town of Saratoga generally ranks high for susceptibility to groundwater contamination.

Many land use activities have the potential to impact the quality of groundwater. A landfill may leach contaminants into the ground that end up contaminating groundwater. Gasoline may leak form an underground storage tank into groundwater. Fertilizers and pesticides can seep into the ground from application on farm fields, golf courses or lawns. Leaking fluids from cars in junkyards, intentional dumping or accidental spills of paint, used motor oil, or other chemicals on the ground can result in contaminated groundwater.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

A cultural resource is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to Native Americans or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements that signify heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings; sites and landscape that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society. Much of the historical context below was provided by town resident and local historian Steven Bornbach.

Historical Context

Natives and early history:

Saratoga was once home to three major indigenous groups, or tribes, they were the Chippewa at Swallow Rock south of Nekoosa, the Menomonie along present-day Ross Lake north of Ten Mile Creek, and the Ho-Chunk, thought to be across the river along Lynn Creek. Natives concentrated along the western portion of the township along the Wisconsin River and tributaries for travel by canoe and fishing. Numerous mounds built by indigenous peoples can be found along the Wisconsin River throughout central Wisconsin.

Early Europeans to the area:

Europeans began traveling to the area in the late 1600's. The French held control of the region during the 1600 and most of the 1700's. Central Wisconsin played a significant part in the fur trade between the French and native tribes. It was the French who originally settled Green Bay and continued west and north up the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers as the rivers were the primary travel corridors. Following the French and Indian War in 1763 the area become a territory of Great Britain. Twenty years later it became a territory of the United States. Trading posts were established to provide lodging, food, and goods for hunters, trappers, natives, and new arrivals to the land.

Permanent Settlements:

More and more people continued to settle in the area. As a result, in 1836, the Menomonee Tribe ceded a strip of land 3 miles wide on each side of the Wisconsin River. Initially the land was logged, from present day Adams County to Marathon County. Saratoga was then a hub for the lumber industry, along with other river communities as the vast forests of Wisconsin were harvested. Lumber barons came and went as settlements sprang up.

Amable Grignon had a trading post west of the Wisconsin River in 1827 until it was flooded out. It was then moved across the river to the east and built a dwelling along Fourteen Mile Creek in present day Adams County and later built a trading post in 1832 along the north side of Ten Mile Creek in present day Saratoga. A settlement soon sprang up across the creek to the south with a store, post office, and other amenities.

Daniel Whitney was another key pioneer. He began logging along the Wisconsin River and then settled on a site for a sawmill in the north part of Saratoga across from present day Nekoosa. Supply issues were a major problem, so Whitney blazed a trail from Portage City, through the Grignon Settlement, to his sawmill. That trail became known as 'The Pinery Road.'

In 1837, Robert Wakely arrived with his family to the area in hopes of doing trade with natives and frontiersmen. He established a trading post and tavern which was favored over many others upriver, because of an abundant supply of fine spirits for thirsty souls. Wakely settlement was located at the bottom of the river's rapids in a spot called Pointe Basse, just below present-day Nekoosa. The Tavern still stands and is listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

In the 1830s and 1840s, many English and Irish emigrants were arriving in the area from the state of New York. They named many of the communities after those they left in New York, such as Hancock, Almond and Plainfield. Many of these same immigrants then made their way into this immediate area, and quite possibly brought the name of Saratoga with them.

The area settlement grew to over a dozen buildings and had an operational ferry for river crossings. The area officially formed as a township on January 9, 1857. Eventually, the land was clear cut and agriculture took its place. Many settlers came to the area to establish farms, but eventually found the sandy soil difficult to sustain a livelihood. In 1916, a steel bridge was constructed linking the Town of Saratoga to the City of Nekoosa; previous transportation across the river was only by ferry.

As farming declined, in the late 1920s and continuing until 1940, a cooperative effort between landowners and the University of Wisconsin resulted in replanting thousands of acres of trees. Many farms in the county that were abandoned would eventually become county forest land. The larger area including the City of Wisconsin Rapids, The Villages of Biron, Nekoosa and Port Edwards became important papermill towns providing many employment opportunities for residents. Papermaking is still an important part of the area economy, but there has also been substantial economic diversification over the years.

Historical/Cultural Resources

Historic structures and cultural areas provide a sense of place, enhance community pride, and reinforce social and cultural enrichment. The identification of existing historic structures and cultural areas are an important consideration in all town planning efforts, as these features are critical to defining a community's look and character.

There are two properties – Wakely Tavern and Wakely Road Bridge - within the Town listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the official national list of historic properties in America worthy of preservation, maintained by the National Park Service. The State Register is Wisconsin's official listing of state properties determined to be significant to Wisconsin's heritage and is maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Both listings include sites, buildings, structures, objects, and districts that are significant in national, state, or local history.

The Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) is a collection of information on historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and historic districts throughout Wisconsin. Caution should be used as the list is not comprehensive and some of the information may be dated, as some properties may be altered or no longer exist. Eight properties within the Town of Saratoga are listed on the Architecture and History Inventory

The Archaeological Site Inventory (ASI) is a collection of archaeological sites, mounds, unmarked cemeteries, marked cemeteries, and cultural sites throughout Wisconsin. Similar to the AHI, the ASI is not a comprehensive or complete list; it only includes sites reported to the Wisconsin Historical Society. The Wisconsin Historical Society estimates that less than one percent of the archaeological sites in the state have been identified. Wisconsin law protects Native American burial mounds, unmarked burials, and all marked and unmarked cemeteries from intentional disturbance. Contact the Wisconsin Historical Society Division of Historic Preservation for more information. There are 33 sites within the Town of Saratoga listed on the Archaeological Site Inventory.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Agriculture is limited in the town. Historically most farms failed over the years, because of the poor soils and high ground water. Without water and chemical fertilizers large scale agriculture is difficult. As a result, the town is not a major agricultural area. Today there is only limited farming in the town including an organic cranberry operation, a Christmas tree farm, and some small hobby farms.

NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

There are a variety of existing programs available to the Town related to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. Some of these may be helpful to access to help achieve some of the Town's goals. For specific program information, the agency or group that offers the program should be contacted.

Private Forestry
The WDNR's goal is to motivate private forest landowners to practice sustainable forestry by providing technical forestry assistance, state and federal cost-sharing on management practices, sale of state produced nursery stock for reforestation, enrollment in Wisconsin's Forest Tax Law Programs, advice for the protection of endangered and threatened species, and assistance with forest disease and insect problems. Each county has at least one Department forester assigned to respond to requests for private forestland assistance. These foresters also provide educational programs for landowners, schools, and the general public. Both private and industrial forest landowners have enrolled their lands under the Managed Forest Law.

Managed Forest Law (MFL)
The purpose of the MFL is to promote good forest management through property tax incentives. Management practices are required by way of an approved forest management plan. Landowners with a minimum of 10 contiguous acres (80% must be capable of producing merchantable timber) are eligible and may contract for 25 or 50 years. Open lands must allow hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and sight-seeing; however, up to 80 acres may be closed to public access by the landowner. There is a 5% yield tax applied to any wood products harvested. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations
Nonprofit conservation organizations are eligible to obtain funding for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes and restoration of wildlife habitat. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, protection of rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Nonpoint Source Program (NSP)
Wisconsin's NPS Program, through a comprehensive network of federal, state and local agencies working in partnership with other organizations and citizens, addresses the significant nonpoint sources in the state. This program combines voluntary and regulatory approaches with financial and technical assistance. Abatement activities include agriculture, urban, forestry, wetlands and hydrologic

modifications. The core activities of the program — research, monitoring, data assessment and management, regulation and enforcement, financial and technical assistance, education and outreach and public involvement — work to address current water quality impairments and prevent future threats caused by NPS pollution. Contact the WDNR for more information.

Drinking Water and Groundwater Program
This WDNR program is responsible for assuring safe, high quality drinking water and for protecting groundwater. This is achieved by enforcing minimum well construction and pump installation requirements, conducting surveys and inspections of water systems, the investigation and sampling of drinking water quality problems, and requiring drinking water quality monitoring and reporting. A team of specialists, engineers, hydrogeologists, and a program expert and program assistants staff the program. WDNR staff provide assistance to public and private well owners to help solve water quality complaints and water system problems. They also provide interested citizens with informational or educational materials about drinking water supplies and groundwater.

The Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center allows residents in the Town of Saratoga and other areas in central Wisconsin to determine the safety of their well water by providing the opportunity to have their well water tested. Residents can send in water samples of their well water to any state-certified testing laboratory, including the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, which houses the Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center.

Aquatic Habitat Protection Program
The WDNR provides basic aquatic habitat protection services through their staff. Staff members include Water Management (Regulation) Specialists, Zoning Specialists, Rivers (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-FERC) Specialists, Lakes Specialists, Water Management Engineers, and their assistants (LTEs). The program assists with water regulation permits, zoning assistance, coordination of rivers, lake management, and engineering.

Endangered Resources Program
The DNR's Endangered Resources staff provides expertise and advice on endangered resources. They manage the Natural Heritage Inventory Program (NHI), which is used to determine the existence and location of native plant and animal communities and Endangered or Threatened Species of Special Concern. The NHI helps identify and prioritize areas suitable for State Natural Area (SNA) designation, provides information needed for feasibility studies and master plans, and maintains the list of endangered and threatened species. All management activities conducted by Wildlife Management and Forestry staff must be reviewed to determine the impact on NHI-designated species. A permit for the incidental take of an Endangered or Threatened species is required under the State Endangered Species Law. The Endangered Resources Program oversees the permit process, reviews applications and makes permit decisions. Funding for the Endangered Species Program comes from a number of sources, including tax checkoff revenue, license plates, general program revenues (GPR), gaming revenue, Natural Heritage Inventory chargebacks, wild rice permits, general gifts and Pittman Robertson grants.

Fisheries Management Program
The WDNR funds this program primarily through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. The program assists with fishery surveys, fish habitat improvement/protection, and fish community manipulation. This program may also be used to fund public relations events and a variety of permitting and administrative activities involving fisheries.

Wildlife Management Program
The DNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management oversees a complex web of programs that incorporate state, federal and local initiatives primarily directed toward wildlife habitat management and enhancement. Programs include land acquisition, development and maintenance of State Wildlife Areas, and other wild land programs such as State Natural Areas. Wildlife Staff work closely with staff of state and county forests to maintain, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat. Wildlife Management staff conduct wildlife population and habitat surveys, prepare property needs analysis's, develop basin wildlife management plans and collaborate with other DNR planning efforts such as Park, Forestry or Fishery Area Property Master Plans to assure sound habitat management. Funding comes from the federal government in the form of Endangered Species grants and Pittman-Robertson grants and from state government in the form of hunting and trapping license revenues, voluntary income tax contributions, general program revenue and Stewardship funds.

NRCS Conservation Programs
The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) natural resources conservation programs help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. NRCS provides funding opportunities for agricultural producers and other landowners through these programs:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) by USDA's Farm Service Agency
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- Small, Limited, and Beginning Farmer Assistance
- Working Lands for Wildlife

Wetlands Reserve Program
The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program which was established to restore wetlands on lands which were previously altered for agricultural use. The program is administered by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service in consultation with the Farm Service Agency and other federal agencies.

Land is eligible for enrollment in the WRP if the landowner has owned that land for at least one year, and the land is restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits. Landowners may choose to restore wetlands with a permanent or 30-year easement, or enter into a cost-share restoration agreement with the USDA. If a permanent easement is established, the landowner will receive payment up to the agricultural value of the land and 100% of the wetland restoration costs. The 30-year easement payment is just 75% of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site, and 75% of the restoration costs. Voluntary cost-share restoration agreements are generally for a minimum of 10 years, and 75% of the cost of restoring the land to wetlands is provided. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land.

Discovery Farms Program
Discovery Farms is a program administered by UW-Extension that works with over 40 farmers across the state of Wisconsin. The program's mission is to "develop on-farm and related research to determine the economic and environmental effects of agricultural practices on a diverse group of

Wisconsin farms; and educates and improves communications among the agricultural community, consumers, researchers and policymakers to better identify and implement effective environmental management practices that are compatible with profitable agriculture." On-Farm projects fall under one the following categories: Nitrogen Use Efficiency, Tile Monitoring, Leachate Collection Systems, Watershed water quality, and Edge-of-Field Runoff Monitoring.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants
The Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides funding to producer-led groups that focus on nonpoint source pollution abatement activities through the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program (PLWPG). The goal is to improve Wisconsin's soil and water quality by supporting and advancing producer-led conservation solutions by increasing on the ground practices and farmer participation in these efforts.

Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Wisconsin Historical Society
This office is part of the Wisconsin Historical Society and serves as the principal historic preservation agency in the state. In partnership with communities, organizations and individuals, the SHPO works to identify, interpret and preserve historic places for the benefit of present and future generations.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal 1: Reinforce the Town's rural character by encouraging the preservation of forested land, sensitive environmental areas, wildlife habitat, rural vistas, and local cultural resources.

Objectives:

1. Minimize fragmentation of forest lands.

2. Minimize the potential impact on natural resources, environmental corridors, or habitat areas when evaluating potential residential, commercial, industrial, and intensive agricultural uses.

3. Utilize recreational opportunities and the preservation of open space to maintain the rural character wherever feasible. Develop additional park and recreational facilities to meet current and projected needs.

4. Minimize the potential impact on local cultural resources when evaluating new developments. Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or other development activities.

Policies:

1. Support the preservation of forest lands for continued forestry use. The Town will place a high priority on directing development away from areas that have been historically productive forest lands.

2. Encourage landowners to retain contiguous areas of forest lands, natural areas, and open spaces.

3. Discourage the placement of new development in the middle of parcels of forest land to protect the continuity of forest land areas for future use.

4. Avoid development in areas that have documented threatened and endangered species, or have severe limitations due to steep slopes, poor soils, or sensitive environmental areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and streams to protect the benefits and functions they provide.

5. Collaborate with neighboring municipalities to ensure access to recreational opportunities for all Town residents.

6. Work with community residents and developers to determine suitable locations for new park or recreational facilities.

7. Collaborate with State, County, and local efforts to celebrate people, sites, and events of local significance whenever appropriate or feasible.

8. Encourage maintenance and rehabilitation of historic areas and buildings.

Goal 2: Reduce the potential for land use conflicts between farm and non-farm uses, as well as between farms.

Objectives:

1. Encourage existing and expanding forestry operations to follow "Best Management Practices."

2. Direct new and expanding uses to areas as defined in the Future Land Use Map.

3: Support small scale agriculture uses that complement the area's unique natural resources.

Policies:

1. All existing, expanding, or new farming or forestry operations are encouraged to incorporate the most current "Best Management Practices" as identified by but not limited to the following agencies:

    - Wood County
    - University of Wisconsin Extension
    - Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
    - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
    - National Resource Conservation Service

2. Encourage higher density and cluster development that preserves natural areas.

3. Promote non-animal micro farming operations as complimentary in rural residential areas.

Goal 3: Protect surface water and groundwater quality.

Objectives:

1. Monitor water quality testing throughout the Town.
2. Enhance and restore soil resources.
3. Encourage organic methods for agricultural activities.

Policies:

1 Periodically collect or conduct testing.

2. Discourage land uses that would degrade local water resources.