

# Chapter 2

## Natural 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 administrated at the county, state, or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below. Natural resources covered in this chapter include biology, geology, and geography including terrain, soils, water, forests, wetlands, wildlife, and habitat.

Cultural resources include a community's heritage, archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to indigenous peoples or other cultural groups. Cultural resources also include arts and the way of life in a community. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinct.

### Previous Plans and Studies

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the 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.

#### [Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2021-2030](#)

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2021 to 2030. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

1. Land Use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments and protect rural character.
2. Improve and protect the surface and ground water assets to enhance public health and safety, recreational opportunities and economic development.
3. Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
4. Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

### Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2024-2033

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage the preservation of farmland and agricultural production capacity. There are an abundance of agricultural areas in close proximity to the Village, making this program of overall importance to the County in general and may have an impact on Village residents and visitors, for example, related to emerging trends such as the local foods movement.

### Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan, 2021-2035

The Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forest and is updated every ten years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the County. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management and tourism.

### Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide, 2001

The Groundwater Protection Guide was an extension of a 1988 groundwater plan. In April 2001, the guide was created to assist county and local officials in setting policy related to groundwater. It also serves as a resource for information about groundwater and strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection. The County is considering a new groundwater planning effort.

### USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater through Comprehensive Planning, 2007

In a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin System and the U.S. Geological Survey, a website has been made available with data and information on geology, general hydrology and groundwater quantity and quality. The website was developed to aid government officials and planners in addressing groundwater in their comprehensive plans. The most recent data available for Marathon County was published in 2007. The full Marathon County report is available on the website: <https://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/marathon/index.html>.

## **Natural Resources**

The environmental features and assets that are examined in this plan include water, wetlands, floodplains, soils, and woodlands. Protection of certain natural features is necessary for the environment and for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values; they are essential to long-term preservation of life, health, and general welfare.

A large area of wetland and floodplains surrounds the Big Rib River which flows through the Village between the originally platted section of the Village and the newer developments along STH 29. While this poses some constraints on development, the river contributes to the natural character of the Village. Topography also affects the natural character of the Village, as Main Street climbs up a hill. See the **Natural Resources Map**.

## Surface Water

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state, and others need focused efforts to improve water quality. Surface water resources help replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from runoff and pollution. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water for domestic, agricultural, and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result, endangering the quality and supply of water in the Village.

The major surface water feature in the Marathon City is the Big Rib River and its tributaries, which run through the Village.

### Watersheds

The Village of Marathon City is geographically located in what the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has named the Central Wisconsin Basin, which is a subset of the entire Wisconsin River corridor located in Central Wisconsin. The Central Wisconsin Basin extends south from the Merrill Dam located on the Wisconsin River in Lincoln County to the Castle Rock Flowage Dam in Juneau and Adams Counties. The Central Wisconsin River Basin is comprised of 29 watersheds, including the Lower Big Rib River watershed which includes the Village of Marathon City. A watershed is an area of land that is drained by a waterway that flows to a lake, reservoir, or river. The watershed boundary line is defined as a topographic dividing line from which surface streams flow in two different directions.

### Floodplains

Floodplains are formally designated areas that experience flooding during a 100-year storm event. The floodplain consists of the “floodway” and the “flood fringe”. The “floodway” is defined as the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional flood discharge. The “flood fringe” is defined as the portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway which is covered by floodwaters during the regional flood and is generally associated with standing water rather than rapidly flowing water.

Development can occur within the flood fringe with appropriate flood proofing or elevation measures. Such measures may provide some relief from flood insurance premiums. Within the floodway, only open uses that do not obstruct flood flow are allowed.

Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). See the Natural Resources map. The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe. Areas within the 100-year floodplain are located near the Big Rib River. Within the Village, several residential dwellings exist within the DFIRM floodplain along River Road. The Village has a long-term desire to have no residential uses within the floodplain and have that land be integrated into the nearby park.

## **Wetlands**

Some areas of wetlands are concentrated around the Big Rib River and the various other streams in the Village, see the **Natural Resources Map**. Wetlands are defined as those areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Soils in wetland areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface. The presence of wetlands in an area can limit the type of development that can occur.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, wetlands control floodwater by moderating peak flows and acting as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams and help reduce water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. Wetlands also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria which may be found in surface or groundwater. They are breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and other animals that depend on aquatic habitats. Wetlands also serve as important recreation, education, and aesthetic resources for communities.

## **Groundwater**

Groundwater is the major source of all water consumption in the Village of Marathon City. The Village operated water utility sources water from three wells on the north side of the Rib River. Depth to groundwater in the Village is mostly shallow and of ample quantity for the current level of development and use. Groundwater quality is affected by surface runoff contamination.

## **Land Resources**

Marathon County's terrain is primarily the result of glaciation. The central area, except for the Wisconsin River Valley, is a mixed terrain of ground moraines and uplands underlain by bedrock at a depth of 2 to 20 feet. Pre-settlement this area was dominated by wetlands, which were drained to make way for agriculture. This area is characterized by a flat to gently rolling landscape, with large tracts of contiguous farmland and forest in the wetter areas and along streams.

## **Non-Metallic Mining**

Non-metallic mines are important sources of locally used construction aggregate and also produce value added stone products (such as shingle aggregate, decorative stone, architectural stone, and railroad ballast) that are marketed regionally and nationally. Local non-metallic mines help to keep construction and infrastructure development costs low by minimizing the high transportation costs of these necessary materials. There are currently three non-metallic mines within the Village of Marathon City.

A non-metallic mining ordinance requires reclamation of mining sites to a purposeful and acceptable landscape appearance and use. The Village recently adopted a non-metallic mining reclamation ordinance to oversee reclamations at the local level.

## **Woodlands**

Woodlands account for approximately 17 percent of total land area in the Village. The woodland areas are concentrated along the Big Rib River. Woodland areas provide protection for environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. In addition, expansive woodland areas provide recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, and economic development.

## **Wildlife Resources and Habitat**

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to County parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park.

## **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 March 2026, NHI tracked only one species with a special status – the Blanding's Turtle - within the Village.

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.

## **Soils & Agricultural Resources**

The United States Department of Agriculture's Conservation Service has an online survey which provides soil data and maps. Four soil groups comprise 63 percent of all soils within the Village, with other soils types represented in very small amounts. The four large soil groups are Fenwood-Rozellville silt loam (27.5%), Fenwood silt loam (16.2%), Dunnville fine sandy loam (10.1%), and Rietbrock silt loam (8.2%).

Soils can also be categorized according to other factors, such as how drained they are on a scale of Excessively Drained to Very Poorly Drained. Another method for categorizing soils is by how good they are for agricultural uses. Over half of the Village contains Class 1 prime farm soils. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. The "prime farm soils" designation given to Class 1 soils indicates that these soils are good for productive farmland. While most of the Village contains soils that offer prime conditions for farming purposes, that does not mean that all of this land is currently being utilized for farming purposes, as only about 17.5 percent of the Village's land is currently being used for farming purposes.

## **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 currently two sites listed as open (indicating they are in need of remediation) on the BRRTS database and 21 sites listed as closed (indicating they have been remediated to DNR standards) within the Village of Marathon City. An additional six contaminated sites within the Village required no action. The current open sites located within the Village are located at 409 Pine St and 800 4<sup>th</sup> St.

Several agencies such as the WI DNR, WEDC, and EPA all offer funding and assistance programs for cleaning up brownfields and contaminated sites. The DNR maintains a list of brownfield resources here: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Brownfields/Financial.html>.

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## Historical and Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are features that signify a community's heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. 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.

The Marathon City Heritage Center serves as a historical and education site to collect Marathon City's cultural and historical assets, records, artifacts, data and stories so they are inventoried, protected and preserved, and shared with the community and public. The center is a vibrant resource for Marathon City where people celebrate community pride and share the history and continued growth of the Village and the surrounding area.

### Community History

Marathon City, which began as the main settlement within the Town of Marathon, was among the earliest settled communities in Marathon County. A group of mill workers in Pittsburgh, known as the Pittsburgh German Homestead Society, banded together in 1856 to purchase land in Wisconsin. Armed with deposits of \$100 per worker, representatives arrived in Stevens Point and purchased 3,000 acres in what later became the Towns of Marathon and Cassel. The settlers followed in 1857 and took steamboats from Stevens Point to Mosinee, then continued their journey with American Indian guides to Marathon.

The site of Marathon City, platted as a village in 1857, was heavily forested. The new residents attempted to build a sawmill and dam the Rib River at Marathon City, but the river's swift current prevented any success. However, Henry Fricke, who came to Marathon City in 1870, built a successful gristmill and sawmill that became the industrial center for the Village and fostered its growth. This business evolved into the Menzner Sawmill and Lumberyard, still in business in Marathon City. When lumbering declined as the primary economic activity, Marathon City became a service center for surrounding farmers.

### 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 is one property in the Village that is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Place: the Fricke-Menzner House at 105 Main Street. The Fricke-Menzner House is significant for its association with Henry Fricke, early mill developer in Marathon City, and Phillip Menzner, lumber businessman and civic leader. The Italianate house, built by Fricke in 1875 and later occupied by Menzner, is significant as the only surviving Italianate style house in Marathon City.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. There are 32 historic properties in Marathon City that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI. The full list is available on the Wisconsin Historical Society's webpage. It is important to note that the AHI lists historical records of surveyed properties and does not reflect the current standing of the properties. Some of the once historical buildings in Marathon City no longer exist, but the list reflects their once historic status and preserves a record of the buildings that were once present in the Village.

## **Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Programs**

There are a variety of programs available to the Village related to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. Some of these are identified below. The following list is not all-inclusive. 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.

### Parks and Recreation Program

The WDNR gets their authority for administering the Parks and Recreation Program from Chapter 27 Wisconsin Statutes. This program provides assistance for the development of public parks and recreation facilities. Funding sources include: the general fund, the Stewardship Program, Land and Water Conservation fund (LAWCON), and program revenue funds.

### 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 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 of 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.

The Marathon County Historical Society is available to assist Village residents with preserving their own history, and artifacts that also build upon the history in Marathon County. Their mission is to collect, preserve, and exhibit materials related to the history of Marathon County, and to use those materials to help people learn about North Central Wisconsin, connect with their roots, and explore their own historical connections.

## Natural Resources and Cultural Resources Issues

- **Big Rib River** – The unpredictability of the River can cause difficulties. The River floods often and is not always navigable. The River could be a great local asset, but it would require clean up and new signage to be safe.
- **Topography Limits Building Sites** – Topographic relief as well as floodplain boundaries limit where urban development can occur. Some areas in the Village are very hilly and rocky making construction more difficult.
- **No Recognition Process** – There is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, the Village does not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.
- **Rural Character and Historic Resources** – Residents in Marathon City have expressed a strong desire to preserve the small town character of the community. An important part of rural character is the small town landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of small town character.

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# Goals, Objectives & Policies

**Natural and Cultural Resources Goal:** The Village of Marathon City manages natural and cultural resources in a balanced way for current and future generations' health, enjoyment, and benefit.

1. Maintain good groundwater quality.
  - a. Evaluate water quality levels on a periodic basis.
  - b. Report instances of possible groundwater contamination to the DNR.
  - c. Enhance monitoring efforts in areas thought to contain possible contamination hazards.
2. Maintain good water quality in existing river and stream corridors.
  - a. Set policies to limit uncontrolled runoff, overuse of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants to surface water.
  - b. Monitor water quality reports from the State.
  - c. Discourage development in areas that will affect surface water resources through increased runoff, loss of vegetation, or improper landscaping.
3. Protect wetlands and floodplains from the encroachment of development.
  - a. Establish local guidelines for development located near wetland areas including type and use.
  - b. Communicate and work with the DNR regarding wetland protection and regulations.
  - c. Encourage the elimination of residential uses from within the floodplain.
4. Ensure that development on slopes does not negatively affect the Village.
  - a. Utilize the review process to ensure that only appropriate developments are built on slopes.
  - b. Ensure that scenic vistas and viewshed provided by slopes are not negatively impacted by development.
  - c. Monitor stormwater management systems in sloped areas for appropriate design capacity.
5. Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.
  - a. Work with the local historical society and/or the County Historical Society to identify historic resources.
  - b. Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials, or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by development activities.