

**RESOLUTION
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Land Conservation Committee
INITIATED BY



Thomas Sweeney
DRAFTED BY

Land Conservation Committee
SUBMITTED BY

October 11, 2019
DATE DRAFTED

Yahara River Basin Adaptive Management Project

1 **WHEREAS**, Yahara Watershed Improvement Network (Yahara WINS) approached the Land
2 Conservation Department (LCD) in 2016 to discuss the merits of developing a partnership for the
3 Adaptive Management Program for Rock County’s portion of the Yahara River Watershed; and,
4
5 **WHEREAS**, Adaptive Management Projects allows municipalities to implement phosphorus reducing
6 projects within the watershed in lieu of making very expensive upgrades to their wastewater treatment
7 facilities while meeting water quality goals for phosphorus. The most cost effective projects for
8 phosphorus reduction can be found in the implementation of best management practices within the
9 agricultural sector; and,
10
11 **WHEREAS**, through many discussions with Yahara WINS management and Land Conservation
12 Department (LCD) staff a service agreement was developed, outlining all requirements for the
13 programs goals and expectations for both parties, more specifically the agreement requires Yahara
14 WINS to reimburse Rock County for all costs associated with the implementation of phosphorus runoff
15 abatement best management practices and associated costs for staff and support for said project on a
16 dollar for dollar basis; and,
17
18 **WHEREAS**, the Service Agreement was entered into by the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) and
19 Yahara WINS in early 2017, which allowed the LCD to commence with the implementation phase of the
20 Adaptive Management Project in Rock County’s portion of the Yahara River Watershed; and,
21
22 **WHEREAS**, since early 2017, LCD staff has engaged landowners who expressed interest in program
23 participation, which has resulted in best management practice installation agreements to be initiated by
24 the land owners and the LCC; and,
25
26 **WHEREAS**, in some instances the BMP costs will exceed the Rock County’s set financial thresholds
27 which require additional approvals by the Finance Committee and County Board of Supervisors; and,
28
29 **WHEREAS**, the Rock County Best Management Practice Installation Agreement WINS-01.19 will
30 exceed the aforesaid thresholds to provide funding for the establishment of a water quality harvestable
31 buffer system in the Yahara River Watershed. The mentioned agreement is based on an incentive
32 payment which requires the landowner to operate and maintain the BMP system for a period of fifteen
33 years.
34
35 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled
36 this 14th day of November, 2019, approves the incentive payments for Rock County Best
37 Management Practice Installation Agreements WINS-01.19 in the sum of \$28,515.

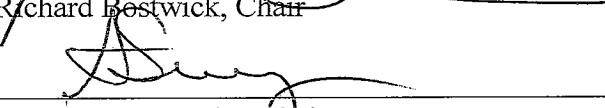
19-11D-357

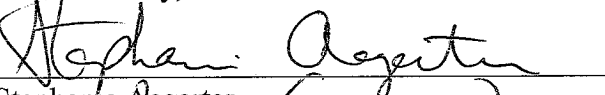
Yahara River Basin Adaptive Management Project
Page 2


Respectfully submitted,

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE


Richard Bostwick, Chair


Alan Sweeney, Vice Chair

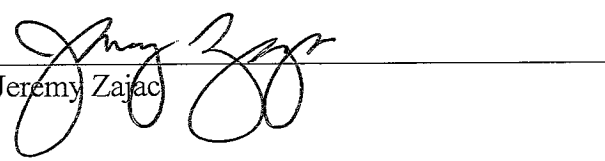

Stephanie Aegerter


Wes Davis


Brenton Driscoll


Robert Potter


James Quade, USDA-FSA Representative


Jeremy Zajac

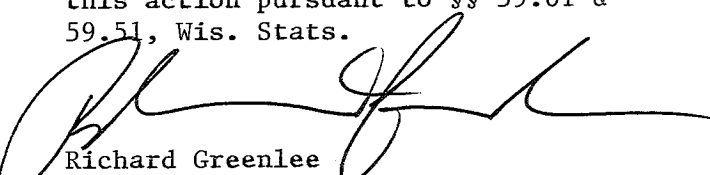
FISCAL NOTE:

The incentive payments are fully reimbursed by Yahara WINS. No County matching funds are required.


Sherry Oja
Finance Director

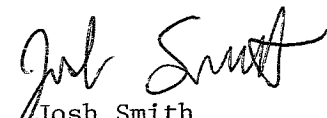
LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to §§ 59.01 & 59.51, Wis. Stats.


Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.


Josh Smith
County Administrator

Executive Summary

The Yahara River Watershed is threatened by excessive phosphorus from sources identified as agricultural runoff, urban storm water and wastewater treatment plant discharges. The elevated phosphorus levels are a threat to water quality and aquatic life throughout the Yahara Watershed. The Yahara Watershed Improvement Network (Yahara WINS), began in 2012 to reduce all phosphorus loads and meet water quality standards established by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). This program employs watershed adaptive management, a strategy in which all producers of phosphorus pollution, point and non-point sources, in the Yahara watershed basin work together to meet water quality goals. This strategy is more effective and less expensive than the sources working separately on individual solutions. Partners in Yahara WINS include cities, villages, towns, wastewater treatment plants, agricultural producers, environmental groups and others.

Yahara WINS approached the Land Conservation Department in 2016 to discuss the merits of developing a partnership to apply best management practices in Rock County's portion of the Yahara River watershed. A Service Agreement was entered into by both parties and the Land Conservation Department's Budget was amended to facilitate the cost share and/or incentive agreements.

Since then, staff has been engaged with various landowners whom expressed interest in the overall programs goals. Numerous agreements have been signed by landowners who have implemented best management practices. Knowing a few agreements would exceed the financial thresholds established by County Board rules, requiring actions by both the Finance Committee and County Board of Supervisors. Rock County Best Management Practice Installation Agreements WINS-01.19 exceeds the established threshold and requires approval from County Board.

Yahara WINS reimburses the County for costs associated with the aforementioned work, on a dollar for dollar basis.