



WESTERN WISCONSIN
CONSERVATION COUNCIL

2019 Cost-share application

High nitrates are a concern in St. Croix county and in other areas throughout Wisconsin. There are several best-management practices that can be implemented to help address high nitrate levels in ground water. The inaugural WWCC cost-share program will include three such practices. Members may apply for the program(s) that best fit their farming system, **all are not required**. Other programs may be added at a later date.

Cover crops: *{\$20 per acre up to 50-acre maximum}*. Cover crops have been shown to reduce soil loss, improve nutrient holding capacity and increase overall soil health. Economic studies have shown that cover crops are a good long-term investment when soil health, yield and nutrient loss are considered. Cover crops play an important role in reducing nitrate delivery to groundwater because certain types (grasses with extensive root systems like cereal rye) can absorb nitrate and other cover crops (legumes) can produce nitrogen, thus the need for less fertilizer.

4-R nutrient stewardship *{Up to \$20 per acre, 50-acre maximum}* Nitrogen use efficiency can be improved by using the 4-Rs of nutrient management: applying the Right source of fertilizer in the Right place at the Right time at the Right rate. Following these basic principles will help ensure your crop has the nutrients to grow prosperously when it needs them most. It also could mean fertilizer savings for you as less fertilizer is being lost in runoff and through leaching. This means less nitrates in ground water and healthier surface waters. The 4-R nutrient stewardship cost share program will help cover the cost of split fertilizer applications, precision soil sampling, plant tissue sampling or nutrient management planning.

No till and limited tillage: *{\$20 per acre up to 50-acre maximum}* reducing tillage leads to improved soil health, greater water holding capacity and reduced erosion. This farming system works best when paired with other conservation tactics like cover crops, reduced nitrogen fertilizer rates and split applications of nitrogen. No till and limited till are also excellent tools to reduce soil loss and run-off which leads to reduced phosphorus loss and help improve water quality in nearby lakes and streams.

How it works:

- ✓ Plant cover crops (whatever variety fits into your farming system) in fields harvested for wheat, corn silage or other crops
- ✓ Plant no-till corn, beans, wheat or other crops
- ✓ Implement no-till, limited/reduced till or strip till in fields harvested for corn, beans or wheat
- ✓ Work with your agronomist/CCA to take soil and/or tissue samples and send them to an accredited lab
- ✓ Use results to create a custom fertility program for your crop and soils: Apply nutrients where and when your crop needs them most
- ✓ Let WWCC know how many total acres are in each practice and how many acres will be cost-shared
- ✓ Share your SNAP files with the WWCC to evaluate the change in estimated nutrient and soil loss from the standard practices compared to the cost-shared practice



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What will you learn:

- The WWCC will work with you and your crop consultant to calculate the risk of nutrient and soil loss from your fields and determine whether cover crops reduce this risk potential
- Your fields will be added to the regional database without field or farm identification so that regional averages can be calculated. You will be able to compare your fields to the regional average
- The WWCC will also provide a comparison of soil loss with and without each cost shared practice

***All individual farm data is confidential.** Final cost-share payments are dependent on available funds

If you are interested in this program, complete the form below

Name: _____ Farm Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

St: _____ Zip: _____ E-mail address: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Cost-share application information:

Cover Crops: _____ Acres enrolled. **Total cover crops:** _____ Acres

4R nutrient stewardship: _____ Acres enrolled. **Total 4R nutrient stewardship** _____ Acres

For 4R, **circle practice:** split fertilizer precision soil sampling tissue sampling NMP

No-till: _____ Acres enrolled. **Total no-till:** _____ Acres

Reduced/limited/strip-till: _____ Acres enrolled. **Total reduced/limited/strip-till:** _____ Acres

Questions? Please contact us at westernwisconservation@gmail.com or 715.760.0216 (Chris van Someren)