

Chippewa County
Farmland Preservation Plan

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Introduction

Chippewa County is located in the Indianhead region of west central Wisconsin. Chippewa County is bordered by Barron and Rusk Counties to the north, Dunn County to the west, Eau Claire County to the south, and Clark and Taylor Counties to the east. The combined land and water area of Chippewa County is approximately 666,428 acres. This amounts to 1,041 square miles, which ranks 12th in land area among Wisconsin Counties.

Chippewa County was established in 1845, after the Governor allowed a split of Crawford County. Chippewa County originally extended from Lake Pepin, on the Mississippi River, nearly to Hurley, Wisconsin, which borders Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In 1848, after Wisconsin became a state, the western boundary of the County was shifted. Since then, the boundaries have been redefined many times.

The land use within Chippewa County is predominately agricultural, with significant urbanized areas, and a recent increase in residential growth. Nearby major urban areas include the Chippewa-Eau Claire metropolitan area, which partially lies within the County, and the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area to the west.

Agriculture is a vital part of Wisconsin's economy and cultural identification. In 2012, agriculture contributed a total of 413,500 jobs, \$30.1 billion in total income and \$88.3 billion to total industrial sales/revenue to Wisconsin's economy⁽¹⁾. Despite these figures agriculture continues to face many challenges from food safety to climate change to water scarcity. However, the most intriguing challenge is the continued effort to conserve and protect raw land from being converted into developed land. For more than a third of a century, the same questions have been asked in Chippewa County, but with different individuals seated at the table. Can public and private entities set all the issues set aside with the ultimate charge of encouraging appropriate actions and policies which will drive development towards more unproductive land and protect the productive lands for existing and future agriculture uses? In other words, can Chippewa County find a unique balance between development and agriculture preservation?⁽¹⁾Source: *UW-Extensions: Contributions of Agriculture to the Wisconsin Economy: 2012*.

For decades the residents of Chippewa County and the political entities have wrestled with land use regulations. While regulations exist in some fashion, they have not been sophisticated enough to produce true results in the protection of farmland. But, until a consensus can be obtained by a majority of the stake holders, any type of farmland protection will have to be initiated by the owners of land. This basic or grass roots effort will then allow land use regulations to be dovetailed into true policies and land use regulations that allow a partnership between the private and public sectors with the result of "true" farmland protection.

In March of 2014, Ben Brancel, Wisconsin's Secretary of Agricultural, noted that the world's population is projected to grow to 8.3 billion by the year 2030. By 2050, that number will increase by another billion. Brancel reported that Wisconsin has seen a 41 percent increase in dairy exports within the past year, while the United States has seen a 63 percent increase of products being exported to China. In 2012, Wisconsin agricultural exports had a record-setting year, with \$2.9 billion worth of products sent to 149 countries.

Because of the economic importance of agriculture in Wisconsin and the potential for the continued loss of our agricultural land base, farmland preservation planning is crucial to preserve important agricultural. Although well-crafted farmland preservation plans may not necessarily restrict the rate of land development; they can help to redirect development towards more appropriate areas, preserve prime farmlands, promote balanced growth, and keep infrastructure costs low, while strengthening local economies and protecting the environment.

The overall agricultural community is an important economic force, which helps to drive and fuel the overall economic picture for Chippewa County. This sector of the economy includes hundreds of family- owned farms, related businesses and commercial operations that provide equipment, services and other products that the farming community needs to process, market and deliver food and fiber to the consumers.

Occupations supported by the agriculture industry include farmers, farm employees, veterinarians, crop and

livestock consultants, feed and fuel suppliers, farm machinery and equipment manufacturers, farm related building contractors, agricultural lenders, food processors, suppliers, and equipment manufacturers, as well as employees working in insurance, marketing, accounting, and finance.

Working Lands Initiative

In 2009, the State of Wisconsin instituted the *Working Lands Initiative*. The Working Lands Initiative is comprised of three program components: a revised Farmland Preservation Program and two new programs – the Agricultural Enterprise Area Program and the Purchase of Conservation Easement Program. Counties that voluntarily participate in the Farmland Preservation Program will afford local farmers the ability to apply for income tax credits. Farmland Preservation Plan updates are needed to assess the current trends and development pressures within each county as well as to continue to promote the economic development of agriculture.

Under the Working Lands Initiative, changes to farmland preservation planning include:

- Modernizing farmland preservation plans to meet current land use challenges
- Providing flexibility for designating areas planned for farmland preservation
- Requiring consistency between local plans

This Farmland Preservation Plan describes goals and policies relating to farmland preservation as well as identifies and maps Farmland Preservation Areas within Chippewa County. This plan is intended to satisfy the requirements of Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 91 and to maintain Chippewa County's eligibility for benefits available to property owners through the *Working Lands Initiative*.

Agricultural Enterprise Areas – (AEA)

The Wisconsin Department of Agricultural, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has approved two petitions in Chippewa County for AEA's. The Bloomer AEA is located in the northern part of the county in the Town of Bloomer and comprises of approximately 4,780 acres of farmland. The Cadott AEA is located in the eastern part of the county in the Towns of Goetz and Delmar and comprises of approximately 1,829 acres.

Other Plans

Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan – July 2010

A comprehensive plan is a local government's guide to community physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a twenty-year vision for future planning and community decisions.

The law provides flexibility to local governments in addressing statutory requirements. One of the requirements is found in Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001, which sets that tone by requiring consistency between the adoption of or amendments to existing regulations such as official mapping, land division regulations or zoning ordinances, and that community's comprehensive plan.

While a local government may choose to include additional elements, a comprehensive plan must include nine elements as defined by the Comprehensive Planning Law. Those elements are as follows:

- Issues and Opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Land Use
- Implementation

Chippewa County’s Comprehensive Plan does not pre-empt town comprehensive plans, but rather provides a frame work through which towns are able to implement goals, objectives and policies set forth in their own comprehensive plans. Chippewa County has 23 towns, 4 villages and 5 cities. Of the 23 towns, 16 towns have completed a comprehensive plan; six (6) have adopted the County Zoning Ordinance and one (1) has adopted Town Zoning powers.

Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Plan

This plan has been developed by the Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Committee to:

- Define local environmental issues of priority concern and to establish local natural resource management and conservation program objectives.
- Serve as a contributing component to the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resource Element of the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan.
- Document the procedures that are now used by Chippewa County to coordinate land and resource management programs administered by county departments and state and federal agencies.
- Provide an implementation framework, activity schedule, and budget projections to pursue the natural resource management and associated rural economic development objectives, as initially defined through the Chippewa County strategic planning process.
- Meet the formal criteria established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for “watershed-based plans” and provide an implementation framework for state and federally- sponsored water conservation and nonpoint source water pollution control projects.
- Meet the statutory requirements for a county land and water resource management plan, as required in Wisconsin State Statutes 92.10(6).

Land Use Conditions and Trends

Land Use

Table 1 - Existing Land Use									
Chippewa County 2014 Final - Equated Statement of Assessment	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Agriculture	Undeveloped	Agriculture Forested	Forested Land	Other	Total
Town									
Anson	1,404	221	133	11,376	3,370	1,149	1,962	118	19,733
Arthur	585	306	-	12,417	4,582	2,927	4,162	240	25,219
Auburn	977	7	159	12,247	1,190	3,882	2,084	154	20,700
Birch Creek	435	84	-	4,440	4,737	1,768	3,502	95	15,061
Bloomer	764	137	4	18,686	2,851	2,655	3,230	224	28,551
Cleveland	832	43	5	7,148	6,127	3,231	6,862	101	24,349
Col burn	1,168	33	-	16,251	4,723	5,819	9,552	200	37,746
Cooks Valley	644	50	385	14,718	1,519	2,377	1,320	152	21,165
Delmar	575	30	1	19,378	5,048	961	795	266	27,054
Eagle Point	2,324	567	65	16,563	7,489	3,263	6,180	219	36,670

Edson	681	15	3	23,673	2,039	3,255	3,626	484	33,776
Estella	428	35	-	5,395	4,286	2,247	5,801	41	18,233
Goetz	586	95	1	10,786	2,011	2,224	2,201	136	18,040
Hallie	183	30	-	2,584	510	746	171	46	4,270
Howard	834	19	156	13,970	848	3,746	1,580	240	21,393
Lafayette	3,640	398	11	8,175	1,262	3,015	3,531	110	20,142
Lake Holcombe	920	193	49	2,672	3,082	940	6,020	37	13,913
Ruby	346	15	-	9,967	4,117	3,073	6,019	211	23,748
Sampson	1,378	124	5	9,228	7,434	2,087	7,278	159	27,693
Sigel	763	36	-	9,852	2,922	4,022	3,681	143	21,419
Tilden	1,368	83	6	16,153	1,320	2,218	725	246	22,119
Wheaton	3,682	293	90	21,057	2,120	2,837	1,602	157	31,838
Woodmohr	1,009	161	109	16,064	2,183	1,276	644	219	21,665
Town Total	25,526	2,975	1,182	282,800	75,770	59,718	82,528	3,998	534,497
Villages									
Boyd	20	29	-	785	27	33	2	11	907
Cadott	198	335	12	695	235	38	56	19	1,588
Lake Hallie	2,504	1,360	148	1,239	399	133	505	19	6,307
New Auburn *	124	16	102	842	251	123	100	14	1,572
Village Total	2,846	1,740	262	3,561	912	327	663	63	10,374
Cities									
Bloomer	118	109	75	144	14	6	-	1	467
Chippewa Falls	439	989	393	210	-	14	81	2	2,128
Cornell	519	117	73	146	155	61	423	-	1,494
Eau Claire *	121	208	462	134	-	-	-	-	925
Stanley *	339	255	94	297	245	-	-	7	1,237
City Total	1,536	1,678	1,097	931	414	81	504	10	6,251
COUNTY TOTAL	29,908	6,393	2,541	287,292	77,096	60,126	83,695	4,071	551,122

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Chippewa County has over 52% of the land assessed as agriculture according to the 2014 Final Equated Statement of Assessment. When you add in the undeveloped, Agriculture Forested and Forested Land percentages, the land available for potential agriculture use swells to over 91%.

Population

Table 2 – Population Projections 2015-2030

Chippewa County Population Projections 2015-2030									
	CENSUS				ESTIMATE	POPULATION PROJECTIONS			
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030
TOWNS									
Anson	1,590	1,634	1,881	2,076	2,100	2,140	2,235	2,315	2,385
Arthur	856	756	710	759	770	780	800	820	830
Auburn	456	474	580	697	697	715	750	785	810
Birch Creek	540	500	520	517	522	525	535	540	545
Bloomer	930	880	926	1,050	1,057	1,075	1,120	1,155	1,185
Cleveland	732	758	900	864	866	870	880	890	890
Colburn	760	731	727	856	873	895	940	980	1,020
Cooks Valley	603	594	632	805	823	850	910	965	1,010
Delmar	1,062	994	941	936	946	950	965	970	975
Eagle Point	2,750	2,542	3,049	3,053	3,097	3,180	3,380	3,555	3,700

Edson	1,061	913	966	1,089	1,085	1,100	1,135	1,160	1,180
Estella	483	449	469	433	428	425	425	415	410
Goetz	607	640	695	762	772	785	820	845	865
Hallie	4,275	4,531	4,703	161	168	170	185	195	200
Howard	660	625	648	798	799	815	855	890	920
Lafayette	4,181	4,448	5,199	5,765	5,833	5,955	6,235	6,470	6,670
Lake Holcombe	791	920	1,010	1,031	1,043	1,055	1,085	1,105	1,120
Ruby	514	464	446	494	489	490	500	505	510
Sampson	805	817	816	892	904	920	950	975	1,000
Sigel	782	736	825	1,044	1,040	1,065	1,120	1,170	1,215
Tilden	1,088	1,079	1,185	1,485	1,506	1,550	1,650	1,735	1,815
Wheaton	2,328	2,257	2,366	2,701	2,734	2,795	2,935	3,060	3,165
Woodmohr	967	991	883	932	945	960	990	1,015	1,030
TOTAL TOWNS	28,821	28,733	31,077	29,200	29,497	30,065	31,400	32,515	33,450
VILLAGES									
Boyd	660	683	680	552	551	550	545	535	525
Cadott	1,247	1,328	1,345	1,437	1,445	1,460	1,500	1,525	1,545
Lake Hallie	0	0	0	6,448	6,680	6,900	7,395	7,845	8,245
New Auburn*	452	459	547	528	521	520	520	520	515
TOTAL VILLAGES	2,359	2,470	2,572	8,965	9,197	9,430	9,960	10,425	10,830
CITIES									
Bloomer	3,342	3,180	3,347	3,539	3,545	3,575	3,655	3,705	3,730
Chippewa Falls	12,270	12,749	12,925	13,661	13,635	13,720	13,940	14,070	14,110
Cornell	1,583	1,541	1,466	1,467	1,472	1,475	1,485	1,485	1,480
Eau Claire*	1,657	1,676	1,910	1,981	1,980	1,995	2,025	2,045	2,055
Stanley*	2,095	2,011	1,898	3,602	3,592	3,625	3,690	3,730	3,745
TOTAL CITIES	20,947	21,157	21,546	24,250	24,224	24,390	24,795	25,035	25,120
COUNTY TOTAL	52,127	52,360	55,195	62,415	62,918	63,885	66,155	67,975	69,400

The County's Population is projected to increase by 6,482 individuals from 2013 to 2030. Over 60% (3,953) of the increase is projected to be outside of a municipality such as a city or village. In 1980, approximately 47% of the population lived outside a city or municipality. In 2030, it is projected that just over 48% of the population will be located within the towns. While the growth rate is minor, these projections show that a majority of the population increase will be within the towns. One can assume that the increase in population will put an increase on the need for additional housing, which means additional lots will be required for the placement of those houses.

Housing

Table 3 – Household Projections 2010-20130

Households 2010 to 2030							
	2000 Census	2010 Census	2015 Estimated	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	CHANGE 2010-2030
TOWNS							
Anson	709	841	882	929	973	1,015	20.7%
Arthur	258	278	291	301	311	319	14.7%
Auburn	202	254	265	280	297	310	22.0%
Birch Creek	212	227	234	241	246	251	10.6%
Bloomer	321	388	404	424	443	460	18.6%
Cleveland	313	318	326	332	340	344	8.2%
Colburn	262	329	350	371	391	412	25.2%
Cooks Valley	214	273	293	317	339	360	31.9%
Delmar	314	336	347	355	361	368	9.5%
Eagle Point	978	1,211	1,283	1,375	1,463	1,542	27.3%
Edson	309	376	386	402	415	428	13.8%
Estella	167	167	167	168	166	166	-0.6%
Goetz	231	281	294	310	323	335	19.2%
Hallie	1,690	60	64	71	75	78	30.0%
Howard	235	292	303	321	338	354	21.2%
Lafayette	1,980	2,273	2,388	2,521	2,646	2,763	21.6%

Lake Holcombe	413	464	483	501	516	530	14.2%
Ruby	152	176	178	183	187	191	8.5%
Sampson	330	364	382	398	413	429	17.9%
Sigel	294	390	405	429	453	477	22.3%
Tilden	399	546	580	622	662	701	28.4%
Wheaton	852	1,001	1,054	1,116	1,176	1,233	23.2%
Woodmohr	319	342	358	373	386	397	16.1%
TOWN TOTALS	11,154	11,187	11,717	12,340	12,920	13,463	20.3%
VILLAGES							
Boyd	274	237	240	240	238	237	0.0%
Cadott	562	605	625	648	666	684	13.1%
Lake Hallie	0	2,447	2,663	2,879	3,088	3,288	34.4%
New Auburn	210	209	209	211	213	214	2.4%
VILLAGE TOTALS	1,046	3,498	3,737	3,978	4,205	4,423	26.4%
CITIES							
Bloomer	1,424	1,562	1,605	1,655	1,696	1,730	10.8%
Chippewa Falls	5,638	5,896	6,028	6,182	6,310	6,403	8.6%
Cornell	607	607	621	631	638	644	6.1%
Eau Claire	670	732	750	767	784	798	9.0%
Stanley	817	928	959	994	1,017	1,021	10.0%
CITY TOTALS	9,156	9,725	9,963	10,229	10,445	10,596	9.0%
COUNTY TOTALS	21,356	24,410	25,417	26,547	27,570	28,482	16.7%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

In 2015, it is estimated that almost 54% of the households are located within the County's Cities or Villages. However, in 2030, the percentage drops to just shy 53%. While the one percent decrease seems minor, it is important to note that a majority of the newer households are projected to be located in the towns vs. within the incorporated areas of the county. This is a concern from a standpoint of the potential loss of farmland, which is mostly located within the towns and does consume a greater amount of land because of the minimum lot size requirements which range from just under 1/2 of an acre to 5 acres in size. Most cities and villages see a maximum lot size of just under 1/2.

Transportation

Major regional transportation corridors run through the County. State Highway 29 runs east and west connecting Green Bay to Minneapolis-St. Paul. Interstate 94, which runs west and southeast, is a 15- minute drive south of the County, and connects Minneapolis-St. Paul with Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. State Highway 53 runs north and south and connects Duluth-Superior with Interstate 94. This infrastructure allows for the safe and efficient transportation of people, as well as goods and supplies for business needs.

Rail service can be a large community attribute in terms of economic markets. Many industries prefer to have access to rail service. Chippewa County is served by three railroads. The Union Pacific line parallels US 53 from Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls. It connects to a Union Pacific main cross-country line in Eau Claire. This line, north of Chippewa Falls, was purchased by Barron and Chippewa Counties and is currently operated by a short line operator, Progressive Rail. This line runs north to Cameron, and because the line is being kept in service, it can contribute to future area economic development opportunities. Canadian National operates an east-west line through Chippewa County. The north-south and east-west lines intersect in Chippewa Falls.

Chippewa County is experiencing revitalization in the railroad corridors due to the increase in industrial sand mining in the western portion of the county. The railroad corridors will become a major component of moving product, including agricultural products, from and into the county and surrounding areas.

Utilities & Energy

Power plants generate electricity for distribution to a large area. Substations are industrial installations at which electricity is received from one or more power stations for conversion from alternating to direct current, reducing the voltage or switching before distribution by a low-tension network for general consumption.

Transmission lines are the largest electric lines on the landscape. These lines generate the most public interest because they are the most noticeable electric lines and because of the potential human and animal hazards that can be associated with them. Transmission lines transport electricity from power plants to substations and operate at several thousand volts. They often stand between 60 and 100 feet tall, and serve several hundred thousand customers.

There are a number of companies that provide electric service including Xcel Energy (Northern States Power), Dairyland Cooperative, Cornell Electric, Bloomer Electric, Cadott Electric, Chippewa Valley Electrical Cooperative, and Eau Claire Electric Cooperative

The main providers for gas service are Viking Gas, Xcel Energy, Magellan and WE Energies. However, many areas throughout Chippewa County do not have access to natural gas yet, particularly in areas north of the City of Chippewa Falls. The development of the industrial sand market in the north-west portion of Chippewa County has shown that there is a need for additional lines or capacity for heating fuel, which is either natural gas or propane. This factor dovetailed into the grain drying operations, which also utilize propane or natural gas, will require an in-depth look at the current transportation, storage and delivery of these particular fuels.

Chippewa County is located in a water-rich area of Wisconsin, and for this reason, it has quite a number of dams. In fact, Chippewa County has a total of 51 dams. Most of these are relatively small, for livestock, recreational ponds and flowages. Xcel Energy owns five dams that are used for power generation. Most of the municipally owned dams are used for recreational and flood control measures.

Communications

Connectivity to local, regional, and even global locations is important for individuals in terms of quality of life and public safety, but this is also vital to business survival. Local telephone, wireless and internet services within Chippewa County are provided by several companies. These include Bloomer Telephone Company, CenturyTel, Charter Fiberlink, Chibardun Telephone Coop, Citizens Telephone Coop, Closecall America, Global Crossing, Inc., Granite Telecommunications, LLC, Matrix Telecom, Inc., MCI Metro Access Trans Services, LLC, Metropolitan Telecom of WI, Navigator Telecommunications LLC, New Edge Networks, Inc., Powercom Corporation, Sage Telecom, Inc., Talk America, Inc., Telephone USA of Wisconsin, LLC, Telnet-WI, LLC, West Wisconsin Telcom Coop, Inc., and Wisconsin Bell, Inc.

Economic Growth and Business Development

The Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is a full-time professionally staffed organization solely committed to the economic development of the area. CCEDC recruits developers and retailers, communicates incentives, analyzes markets, demographics and customer trends. CCEDC also collaborates with stakeholders to coordinate and oversee development. CCEDC's professional expertise in managing economic development programs helps attract, retain, and expand businesses, as well as connects communities and businesses with economic development resources. The organization continues to maintain and market an inventory of sites and buildings available for development within Chippewa County and carries on other vital strategies that improve the economic well-being of the area.

Community Facilities and Services

High quality community facilities and services help increase property values, stabilize taxes and positively affect many aspects of quality of life in a community. Local and distinguishing features such as parks, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and protective services are community facilities that help define a community. Special services such as daycare centers and assisted living facilities may also be considered community facilities. The County's Comprehensive Plan goes into greater detail regarding community facilities and services.

In the unincorporated areas, residents and future residents will utilize private on-site wastewater systems (POWTS) to treat the household or commercial domestic waste. For the most part, all the cities and villages, have public wastewater treatment plants and public water lines servicing their households and commercial establishments.

The Village of Lake Hallie currently has a mixture of households and commercial buildings that are serviced either by a private well or the Village's public water system. In addition, all parcels are serviced by individual POWTS, except for a new commercial development located on the south side of the Village. This particular area has a community septic system which will service multiple parcels and businesses.

Chippewa County is fortunate to have a variety of recreational opportunities from trails for hiking, biking and snowmobiling to water resources for fishing and boating. Chippewa County as an entity has county parks (such as Otter Lake, Pine Point, Morris-Erickson and Round Lake), which offers access to different water bodies as well as opportunities to camp and recreate. The Towns and Villages are splattered with parks of different sizes that have amenities from boat landings to playground equipment to picnic shelters.

The availability and level of utilities and community facilities vary greatly depending on ability to pay for them and citizen or taxpayer interest. Utilities can shape the future development within our communities, as well as establish a community identity. Combined with roads, the construction, maintenance, and operation of community facilities are often the largest portion of a community's budget.

Recycling and Solid Waste Management

Wisconsin State Statute 287 encourages waste reduction and recycling in the state by requiring that certain items is recycled. This law assigns responsibilities for recycling to municipalities and provides grant assistance to support local recycling programs.

All municipalities in Chippewa County have developed and now manage a recycling program. Under these programs each municipality arranges for transport of recyclables to processors and pays the cost for materials delivered from their municipality. These costs are in turn paid through tax levy appropriations, grants, and other fees implemented through local budgeting procedures. The municipalities have either developed a drop-off program at a local recycling center or have negotiated contracts with haulers to provide a curbside recycling program. Curbside recycling is available in the Cities of Chippewa Falls, Cornell, and Stanley, the Villages of Boyd and Cadott, and the Town of Anson.

In addition, the county also tries to provide twice per year a special collection program to recycle hazardous household products, appliances, computers and tires.

Solid waste, or garbage disposal, is important to the health and quality of life of residents and business owners. Some Chippewa County communities offer street-side waste collection. In other communities that do not have exclusive contracts or the equipment necessary to provide the service, private property owners must contract their own solid waste collector. Popular service providers in Chippewa County include Veolia Environmental Services, Tambornino Sanitation, LLC, and Waste Management.

Municipal Expansion

The comprehensive plans for cities and villages detail how and when municipal expansions will occur. Most municipalities will encourage lands to be annexed into their own municipal boundaries where compacted development could occur. However, these plans vary in the actual terms of development based on the municipality's individual characteristics.

Municipalities should discuss development agreements, boundary agreements or extra-territorial zoning with the surrounding towns in regards to the future municipal expansion. One point of discussion should be the

willingness of the municipality and the particular landowner to drive development around the productive agricultural land vs. right through the middle of it. It would be the county's desire to work with the municipalities and the surrounding towns to encourage the appropriate development around the prized agricultural lands.

Chippewa County has not experienced a lot of land being annexed into the local municipalities. For the most part, annexation is most likely to occur adjacent to the municipal boundaries by land owners or developers who are seeking smaller lot sizes as well as municipal services such as water and sewer. The City of Bloomer, the Town of Bloomer and the Town of Woodmohr have worked cooperatively on an Extraterritorial Zoning Ordinance since 2009. This agreement was formed due to concerns of the City and potential development on the outskirts of their municipal boundary that would make it difficult for the coordination of future road extensions and public utilities.

The Cities of Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls have adopted Extraterritorial Plat Review for 3 miles outside of their municipal boundaries, which affect the Towns of Anson, Eagle Point, Hallie, Lafayette and Wheaton.

The biggest municipal expansion came in 2003, when a significant portion of the Town of Hallie incorporated into the Village of Lake Hallie. The Village of Lake Hallie has discussed the potential to work with the adjoining towns for extraterritorial plat review, but has not initiated any type of ordinance or procedures.

Environmental Preservation

Understanding Chippewa County's resource base provides an important context for the development of goals, objectives, and policies for the conservation and management of the natural resources. Within the following narrative, various components of the community resource base are examined at a broad level or "planning scale". The purpose of this examination is to provide Chippewa County with the necessary information to make informed decisions and recommendations about future growth and preservation of these resources.

Bedrock & Surface Geology

The main mineral resources in the county are outwash deposits of sand and gravel. Other mineral resources are peat, glacial clay, and crushed Precambrian igneous or metamorphic rocks, such as traprock and quartzite. Some Upper Cambrian sandstone can be used locally for roadfill. Metallic sulfides, particularly copper and iron are disseminated in the Precambrian rocks. Bodies of ore could be in the rocks.

The surface geology of Chippewa County is primarily the result of glacial deposition over bedrock. The modern landscape was most strongly influenced by the glaciers that invaded the county from about 25,000 years ago, and by a glacier that moved into the county from the West about 12,000 years ago. Since the last period of glacial activity, the landscape has been further sculpted by naturally occurring and man-induced erosion and drainage activity.

Watersheds and Surface Water

Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, intermittent waterways and natural drainage ways make up the surface waters of Chippewa County. These resources are all water bodies, standing still or flowing, navigable and intermittent, including natural drainage ways that collect and channel overland rainwater or snowmelt runoff. Natural drainage ways are characterized by intermittent streams, threads, rills, gullies and dry washes that periodically contribute water to first-order streams. There are also many artificial drainage ways where the natural drainage ways have been altered by human activity. All of these features have the ability to transport sediment and pollutants, and are affected by their watersheds, the land that surrounds them.

Chippewa County has a surface water area of over 21,000 acres. Most of this area (19,335 acres) is lakes, with rivers, streams, and trout streams comprising the other 1,700 acres.

Chippewa County lies within 12 watersheds, most of which are located in the Lower Chippewa River Basin. The Upper Chippewa River Basin contains the watersheds of Holcombe Flowage and Lower Jump River.

The surface water in Chippewa County is within the drainage system of the Chippewa River. This river crosses the county from northeast to southwest, falling from an elevation 993 feet above sea level at Cornell to 936 feet at Jim Falls and 839 feet at Chippewa Falls. Chippewa Falls is on the “Fall Line,” where the rivers of Northern Wisconsin leave the areas of resistant rocks of the Laurentian Shield and enter areas of softer sandstone. The Fall Line is an area of rapids or low cascades and is a good location for water-power dams. The Chippewa, Jump, Fisher, Yellow, and Wolf Rivers are the main streams draining the eastern part of the county. Sand, O’Neil, Duncan and Elk Creeks are the major streams draining the western part.

Shorelands

Shorelands provide valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation, and also act as buffers and thus serve to protect water quality. However, shorelands are also considered prime residential building areas because of their scenic beauty.

Recognizing this conflict, and in order to maintain the environmental, recreational, and economical quality of our water resources, the State of Wisconsin requires counties to adopt and enforce a shoreland ordinance.

As required by the State, shorelands are defined as:

- all land within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a lake, pond or flowage; or
- all land within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a river or stream or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever is greater

Each County must meet or exceed the minimum state standards for shoreland protection. The identified shoreland areas are based on the standards as defined in the Chippewa County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

Floodplains

One sensitive land feature that most residents are aware of is the floodplain, the flood-prone lands adjacent to water bodies. Floodplains can be desirable development areas due to the proximity to lakes, rivers and streams, but pose additional problems by possibly putting residents and property at risk. Development in floodplains can also affect the environmental quality of the waterway.

There are some areas of known floodplains in Chippewa County. Development within the floodplain is usually assessed through the use of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

It is important to remember that these maps are no substitute for site specific analysis. Natural and man- made changes in the landscape, and the age and accuracy of flood insurance maps have in some cases limited their reliability for the identification and designation of floodplains.

Wetlands

There are a number of wetland areas within the watersheds that can affect water levels of rivers and creeks flowing through Chippewa County. Wetlands are defined by the State Statute as “an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions.” Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants, replenish groundwater supplies, store floodwaters and maintain stream flows.

Agricultural Resources

Over the past several decades, agriculture as a percentage of the economy has been in a declining trend. Manufacturing, retail, and professional employment opportunities, however, have risen in Chippewa Falls and the

larger Eau Claire Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Despite the agricultural industry decreasing, over half of the County’s land remains as productive agricultural land. Tourism and recreational uses of the County’s natural resources has also increased, offering both residents and visitors access to recreational trails, hunting lands, and surface waters for fishing, boating, and canoeing.

Recently, however, the agricultural and natural resource industries of Chippewa County have experienced a lift from both the increased interest and investment in local food and renewable energy.

Topography

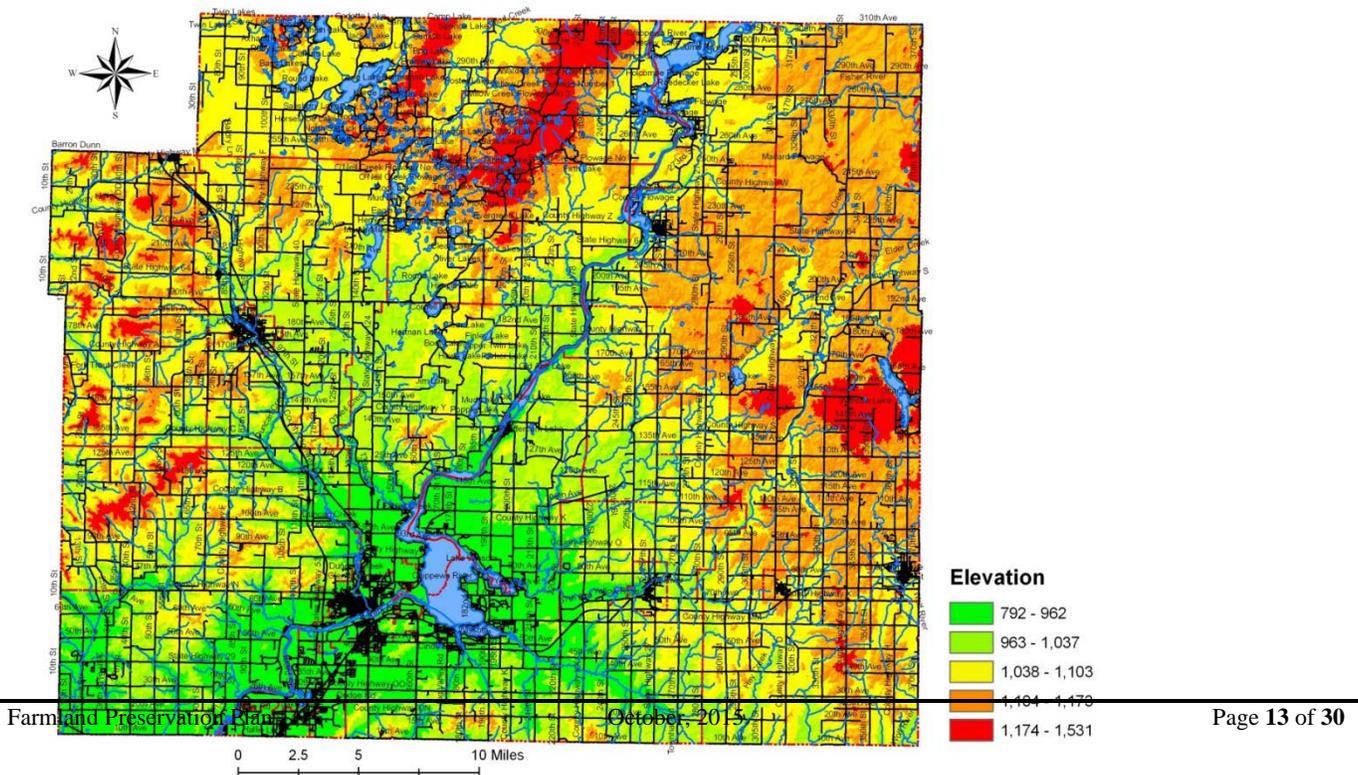
The topography of Chippewa County really has two distinct areas. A well-defined recessional moraine extends southeast from New Auburn, in the northwest corner of the County, to Jim Falls on the Chippewa River. From Jim Falls, glacial deposits extend further southeast to Cadott providing evidence of earlier glacial advances. Surface features of the moraines are characterized by hummocky topography, closed surface depressions and numerous kettle hole lakes, bogs, and wetlands.

A gently rolling till plain, drained by the Fisher River and Yellow River watersheds, extends north and east of Cadott to the borders of Clark, Taylor, and Rusk County. Drainage patterns in these watersheds are poorly defined and reflect glacial processes. Many perched and groundwater contact wetlands are found in closed surface depressions and along drainage ways.

A broad, nearly level, outwash plain extends south from the recessional moraine to the Chippewa River. The area is drained by sub basins of the Duncan Creek, Fisher River, and Lower Yellow River watersheds. Drainage patterns are very poorly defined. Outwash deposits may extend 100 feet below the land surface and are underlain by Cambrian sandstone and Precambrian Granite.

Steeply rolling sandstone upland abuts the central outwash plain and extends west to the Dunn County border. The area is drained by the Red Cedar, Muddy Creek, and Duncan Creek Watersheds. Drainage patterns are very well defined with channelized intermittent streams often extending to the upper reaches of the landscape. Chippewa County elevation is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1- Chippewa County Elevations

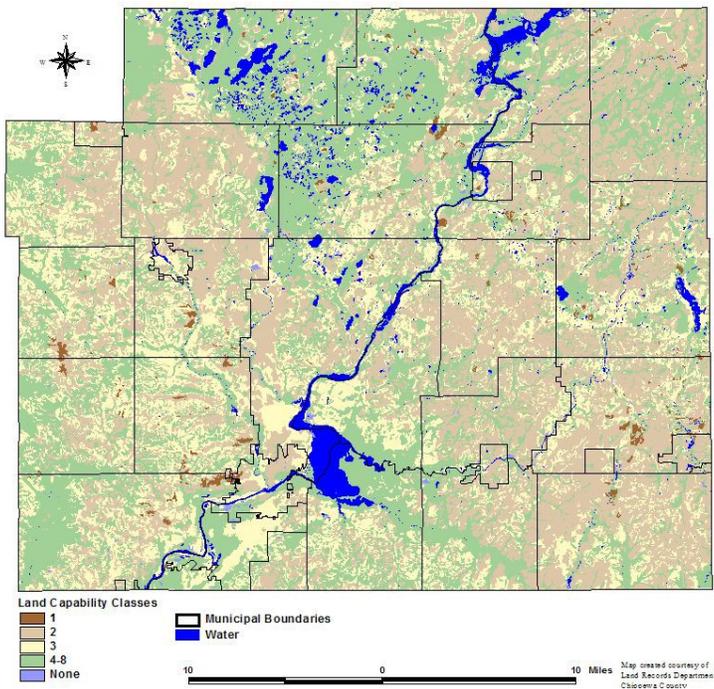


Produced by: West Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission

Soils

There are 666,464 acres of soil in Chippewa County, or about 1,041 square miles. Approximately 63 percent of that soil is being used as farmland. Of that farmland there is 4,477.31 acres of Class I soil, 241,393.98 acres of Class II soil, and 150,548.13 acres of Class III soil and 245,341.19 acres of Class IV-VIII soil. According to the soil survey completed by the USDA Class I soils produce the highest yield and Class IV-VIII soils are considered unsuitable for agricultural uses. Soil Classes are shown in Figure 2.

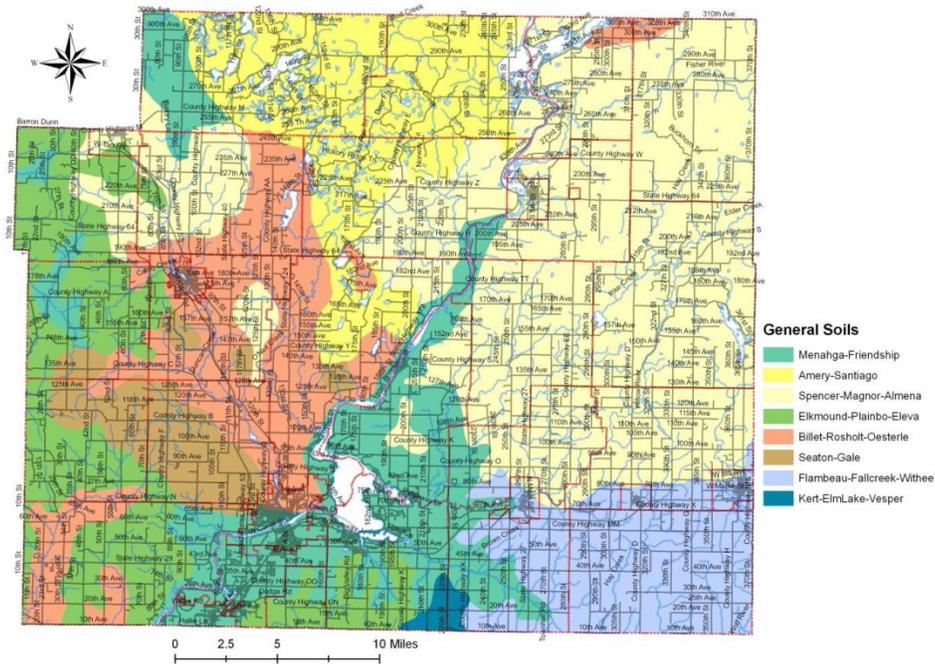
Figure 2 - Soil Capability Classes



Produced by: Chippewa County Planning and Zoning

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has conducted mapping and grouped the soils of Chippewa County into eight different associations. Each association has a distinctive pattern of soils, relief and drainage. Each is a unique natural landscape. The following information regarding these soil types is derived from this initial mapping. The best use of lands is often dictated by the type of soils present. Figure 3 indicates the locations of Chippewa County Soil Associations.

Figure 3 - Chippewa County Soil Associations



Source: NRCS Soil Survey

Produced by: West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Menhaga-Friendship Association: Deep, nearly level to sloping, excessively drained and moderately well drained, sandy soils on outwash plains and stream terraces. These soils are in areas on outwash plains and stream terraces where small hills and depressions are dissected by streams and small drainage ways.

Amery-Santiago Association: Deep, gently sloping to very steep, well-drained, loamy and silty soils on moraines. These soils are on moraines characterized by many knolls, hills and depressions.

Spencer-Magnor-Almena Association: Deep, nearly level to sloping, moderately well drained and somewhat poorly drained, silty soils on moraines. These soils are on ground moraines and terminal moraines.

Elkmound-Plainbo-Eleva Association: Shallow and moderately deep, gently sloping to very steep, well drained to excessively drained, loamy and sandy soils on uplands, outwash plains, and stream terraces. These soils are on uplands underlain by sandstone and on outwash plains and stream terraces.

Billett-Rosholt-Oesterle Association: Deep, nearly level to sloping, well drained to somewhat poorly drained, loamy soils on outwash plains and stream terraces. These soils are in plane or slightly convex areas on outwash plains and stream terraces.

Seaton-Gale Association: Deep and moderately deep, nearly level to steep, moderately well drained and well drained, silty soils on uplands. These soils are on uplands underlain by sandstone and in areas of valley fill.

Flambeau-Fallcreek-Withee Association: Deep, nearly level to sloping, moderately well drained and somewhat poorly drained, loamy and silty soils on ground moraines. These soils are in plane or in slightly convex areas on ground moraines.

Kert-Elm Lake-Vesper Association: Deep and moderately deep, nearly level and gently sloping, somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained, silty and sandy soils on uplands. These soils are on uplands underlain by sandstone and shale.

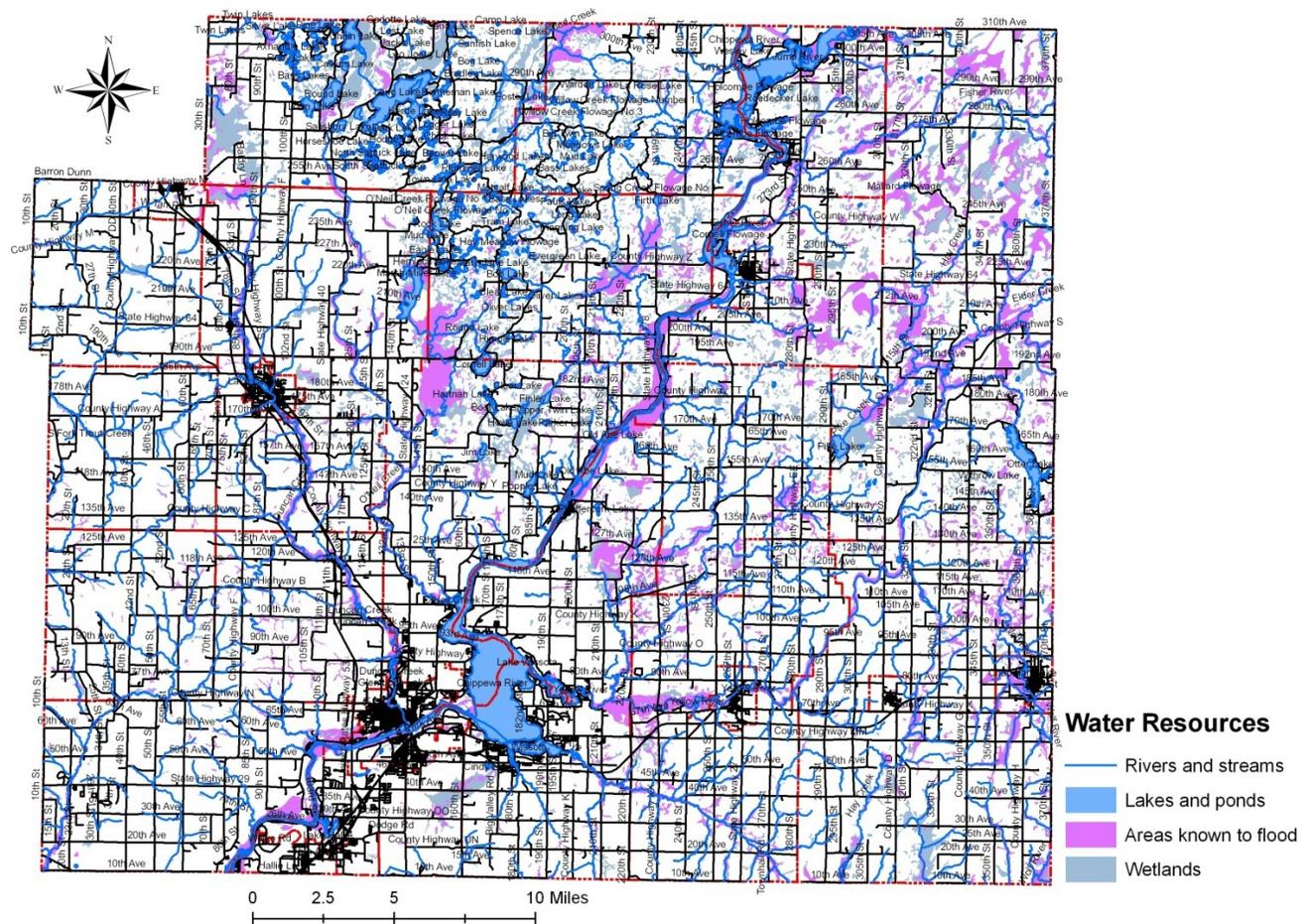
Mineral Resources

There are no metallic mining operations in Chippewa County. Chippewa County does have approximately 85 operating non-metallic mining sites permitted under Chapter NR 135 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. These sites are primarily for the extraction of sand and gravel for use in road construction, concrete mix, and construction fill. However, over the past eight years, large industrial sand mines have been permitted for the extraction of sand utilized in the fracturing of wells in the United States.

Chippewa County Water Resources

Chippewa County has a surface water area of over 21,000 acres. Most of this area (19,335 acres) is lakes, with rivers, streams, and trout streams comprising the other 1,700 acres. Chippewa County lies within 12 watersheds, most of which are located in the Lower Chippewa River Basin. The Upper Chippewa River Basin contains the watersheds of Holcombe Flowage and Lower Jump River.

Figure 4 – Water Resources in Chippewa County



Source: WisDNR

The surface water in Chippewa County is within the drainage system of the Chippewa River. This river crosses the county from northeast to southwest, falling from an elevation 993 feet above sea level at Cornell to 936 feet at Jim Falls and 839 feet at Chippewa Falls. Chippewa Falls is on the “Fall Line,” where the rivers of Northern Wisconsin leave the areas of resistant rocks of the Laurentian Shield and enter areas of softer sandstone. The Fall Line is an area of rapids or low cascades and is a good location for water-power dams. The Chippewa, Jump, Fisher, Yellow, and Wolf Rivers are the main streams draining the eastern part of the county. Sand, O’Neil, Duncan and Elk Creeks are the major streams draining the western part.

Water Quality

In general, the water quality in the Lower Chippewa River basin is a concern. The major concern is from added nutrients and sediment from run-off. Surface and ground water quality can be affected by a wide variety of point and non-point sources, including agricultural run-off, stormwater from parking lots and roads, soil erosion, and spills of hazardous materials. The risk of water contamination increases as development occurs.

Groundwater

Similar to surrounding counties, the source of nearly all potable water is groundwater. However, surface water can be a major source of groundwater recharge, and in the case of Chippewa County, a major factor in maintaining the county's natural and recreational values. Consequently, there is also significant concern for understanding the impacts of development on the surface water resources in the County.

Aquifers throughout the county provide water to wells and springs and replenish the streams and lakes through seepage and spring discharge. The ground water supply is likely to meet the domestic, agricultural, municipal and industrial needs in the county. The ground water is generally soft. Minor water-use problems are caused by locally high concentrations of iron.

Probable well yields from the bedrock aquifers are 0 to 10 gallons per minute in the Precambrian crystalline rocks in the northeastern parts of the county and 10 to 100 gallons per minute in the Cambrian sandstone in the southwestern part. Well yields from glacial deposits are estimated at 0 to 10 gallons per minute in the southwestern part of the county, 10 to 100 gallons per minute in the northeastern part and 100 to 500 gallons per minute on the outwash plains in the central part.

Impaired Waters

Chippewa County contains several waterbodies that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has classified as impaired due to water quality concerns. The following is a list of impaired surface waters, and the reason for their impaired status.

- Chippewa River (various locations) – polychlorobiphenyls
- Chippewa River Holcombe Flowage embay – mercury, polychlorobiphenyls, and sedimentation
- Chippewa River Holcombe downstream to Dells Dam at Eau Claire – mercury and polychlorobiphenyls
- Finley Lake – phosphorus and sedimentation
- Lake Hallie – phosphorus and sedimentation
- Lake Wissota, Moon Bay embayment, Little Lake Wissota – phosphorus and sedimentation
- Otter Lake – phosphorus
- Popple Lake – phosphorus
- Wolf River – phosphorus and sedimentation
- Hemlock Lake, Horseshoe Lake, Howe Lake, N. Shattuck Lake, Riley Lake, Round Lake, Sand Lake, and Two Island Lake – mercury

Point Source Discharges

Private and public sewer systems and wastewater discharges are two potential sources of water pollutants. There are nine municipal and sanitary district wastewater treatment plants that discharge to either surface or ground water in Chippewa County, six stormwater permits, and six industrial discharges.

Steep Slopes

It is generally more desirable, both environmentally and economically, to avoid steep slopes and disrupting natural drainage ways with construction and land development. Problems with erosion and runoff pollution can occur with development on steep slopes, and flooding and wet basements can occur with drainage way disruptions.

Steep slopes are areas with 13 percent of more grade (each percent of slope is measured as one unit in elevation for every 100 horizontal units). Areas having steep slopes can be categorized into three levels, 13 percent to 20

percent slope, 21 percent to 24 percent, and 25 percent and greater.

Development on slopes of 13 to 20 percent should consider direct runoff into lakes, rivers, or streams. In order to minimize the negative effects, construction should also follow state approved construction site erosion control standards, and institute best management practices to control on-site runoff and pollution. Land with slopes of 21 percent or greater represent a definite limiting environmental condition. Development on these slopes results in high construction costs and severe erosion often resulting in negative impacts to surface and ground waters. Development on slopes of 21 percent or greater is highly discouraged.

The Chippewa County Soil Survey indicates that there are approximately 78,000 acres that potentially have a slope of 13 percent or greater, which is about 11.7 percent of the total land base. About 12,500 acres, or 1.9 percent, have slopes of 21 percent or greater, and .2 percent has a slope of over 25 percent. Most of the steepest slopes are located in the northern and western portions of the county.

Forest and Woodlands

Woodlands are an important feature of Chippewa County. In fact, the forests of Chippewa County are the second most extensive land use and land cover in the county, after agriculture. The largest concentrations of woodlands occur in the northern portions of the county. Other large woodland areas are scattered throughout the county.

In 2007, there were 155,500 acres in Chippewa County classified as forests/woodlands, which represents about 23 percent of total County acreage. Please see Figure 6 12. However, this has decreased nearly 30,000 acres between 1990 and 2007, representing almost a 10 percent decrease.

Woodlands provide habitat for wildlife, natural resource base for wood-based industries, resources for the agricultural communities, areas for recreational activities, and scenic beauty, as well as a rural character. Without managed development in these areas, woodlands will become fragmented, which will diminish their ability to provide the resources and activities residents are accustomed to.

Chippewa County Forest

As of 2005, the Chippewa County Forest contained just over 33,000 acres. This land is located near Highway 27 in the Towns of Birch Creek and Ruby. To guide the growth and management of this area, Chippewa County has a 2020 Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This was developed to complement the Comprehensive Plan. About 80 percent of the County forest land base is covered with hardwood, including aspen, oak, red pine, and white pine.

In order to protect forest land, Chippewa County is committed to using techniques to provide for wildlife, forest products, recreation, water quality, aesthetics and ecosystem maintenance. The County will use sustainable forestry practices to conserve air and water quality, soil, ecosystem diversity, wildlife, recreation, and aesthetics to ensure forests will be able to meet future needs. The County employs economically, environmentally, and socially responsible forestry practices, and encourages private landowners to do the same. The County works extensively with the DNR to protect forests from pests, diseases, wildfire, and other damage. The County is also committed to managing and preserving areas of unique geographical, historical, biological, and cultural significance.

Chippewa County has broken the forest lands that they own into zones for aesthetic management. These zones have permitted uses based on the recreational value of the area, and the amount of public traffic seen on the land. Another land classification is high conservation value forests (HCVF). These areas possess unique qualities that the County focuses on protecting, and are shown in Figure 6 13, along with the County Forest boundaries.

Recently, there has been an increase in demand for all-terrain vehicles trails through forested land. There is also a potential for conflict when forest lands are being harvested with residential units nearby. Managing these potential land-use conflicts is important to protecting and keeping forest land viable.

Wildlife, Wildlife Habitat and Open Space

Scattered throughout Chippewa County are various federal, state and local wildlife, fishery, natural and scientific areas, including private conservancy areas. These often encompass one or more of the sensitive land areas discussed previously (e.g., wetlands, forests, shorelands, prairies). These areas are managed as open space to provide important feeding, breeding, nesting, cover and other habitat values to a wide variety of plant and animal species.

Agricultural Enterprises

Chippewa Valley Grain – Elk Mound, Wisconsin

Chippewa Valley Grain began business in 1990. As time went on, there was a need for reliable transportation of their product to the feed dealers, so reliable transportation was added to the business model. They dispatch over thirty trucks daily, hauling bulk commodities in a multi-state area.

The value of diversification within our business has led to the desire to look for more opportunities to develop business that we can succeed at. In 2013 a new intermodal facility was opened in Chippewa Falls by the CN Rail Line. This has opened up sales opportunities to international markets whose countries are growing in size and economic prosperity. Chippewa Valley Grain have begun to transload various Agricultural commodities, helping to meet the needs of these growing economies.

Ace Ethanol, Stanley, Wisconsin

In 2001, a group of local investors constructed a 15-million-gallon ethanol plant in Stanley, Wisconsin. The plant was built to produce ethanol and so local farmers could benefit from the increased value of the corn they grow. Ace Ethanol constantly improves production efficiency to produce ethanol above the official nameplate rating for this plant.

During run-up to full operation, a CO₂ plant was built in order to add CO₂ and dry ice as co-products. Before long, customers signaled the need for additional capacity, so by 2004 the plant expanded to create 30 million gallons of ethanol yearly.

Establishing a second grain-receiving location called Four Corners in 2005 expanded our connection to farmers in our region. Two years later, Four Corners had grown to include 1.3 million bushels of corn storage, enhancing our ability to secure corn needed to maintain a round-the-clock production system.

Their efforts to improve the company will lead to more value for their customers, employees, and the county—anyone who has a stake in the success of renewable energy and Wisconsin agriculture.

River Country Coop – Grain Drying, Storage and Marketing, Bloomer, Wisconsin

River Country Co-op, has recently constructed a new grain facility and division of the company called Bloomer Grain. This new “state of the art” grain drying, storage and commodity marketing office called Bloomer Grain located in Bloomer, Wisconsin is one of the largest storage bins in Western Wisconsin. With the capacity of a 730,000 bushel grain storage bin, a 4,700 bushel per hour dryer and two 75,000 bushel wet bins with a 145 foot tower which allows it to be the fastest unloading system in the market area.

This construction of Bloomer Grain was built to serve the needs of area farmers for the shortage of grain storage in Western Wisconsin. In recent years in and around Western Wisconsin there was a significant amount of grain being dumped and stored on the ground during each fall harvest. River Country Co-op took notice of this need and demand and took on this multimillion dollar grain facility construction project back in April of 2012. For more information of grain drying, storage, trucking, and marketing your grain please give us a call today.

River Country Coop – Agri-Tech Services – Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Agri-Tech Services is River Country Co-op's agronomy division, providing a wide range of quality products and services for the agriculturalist. Services include: Dry & Liquid Fertilizer, Custom Application, (VRT) Variable Rate Technology, Bulk & Packaged Chemical, Customized Farm Planning, Soil Sampling & Analysis, Crop Scouting and Lime.

AMPI – Jim Falls, Wisconsin

Associated Milk Producers Inc. (AMPI) is a dairy marketing cooperative owned by 2,600 Midwest dairy farm families who operate farms in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota. AMPI members own a manufacturing plant and market cheese, butter and powdered dairy products, serving foodservice, retail and food ingredient customers.

Tractor Central, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Tractor Central is Wisconsin's Premiere John Deere dealer, with 10 Sales, Parts, and Service locations, serving 27 counties, in West Central and North West Wisconsin. Locations are: Arcadia, Cameron, Chippewa Falls, Durand, Granton, Menomonie, Mondovi, Sheldon, Westby and West Salem. Tractor Central provides equipment and service for Agricultural, Lawn and Garden, Grounds Care, Commercial, and Government needs through John Deere's and other innovative quality products.

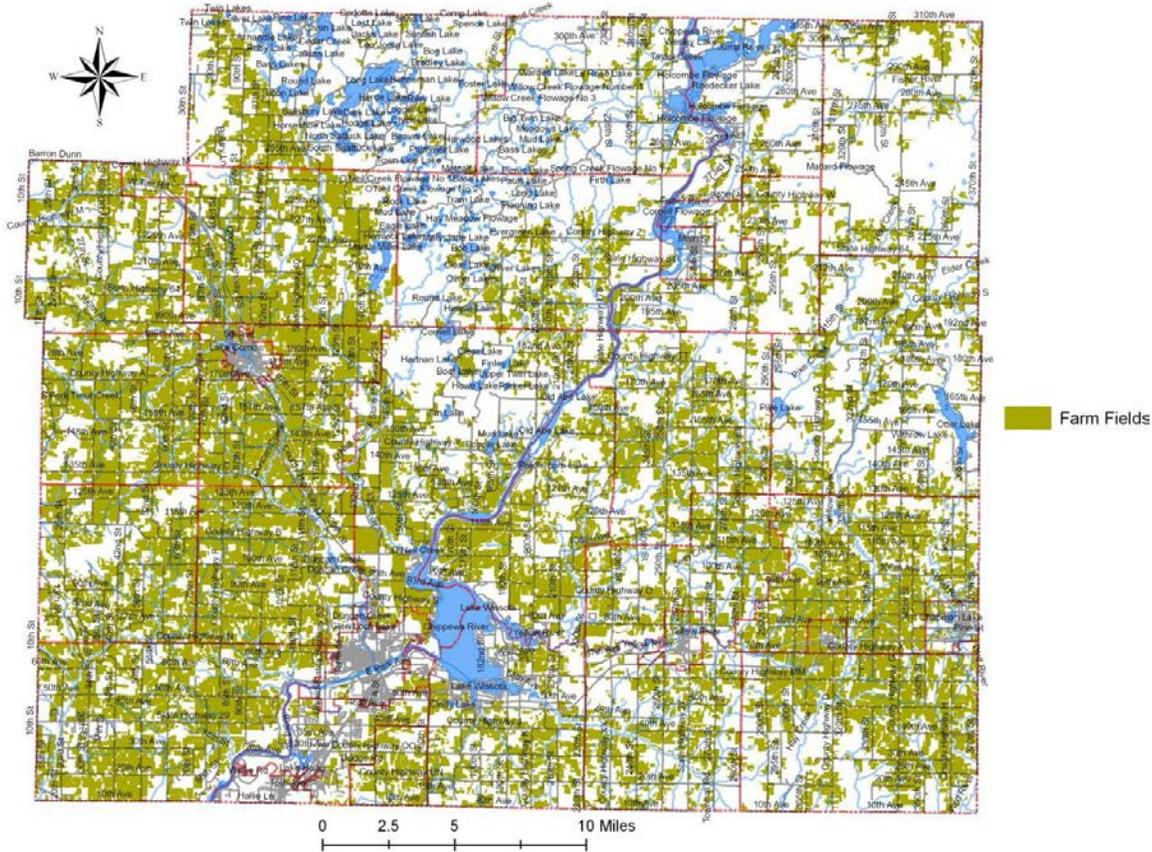
Other Entities

- Bloomer Coop Feeds
- Bloomer Farmers Union Cooperative Oil Compansy
- Chippewa County Coop Dairy Herd Improvement Association
- Chippewa County Farm Bureau Cooperative
- Chippewa County Holstein Breeders Association Cooperative
- Equity Chippewa Valley Livestock Marketing Cooperative
- Wisconsin Farmers Union
- Liberty Milk Marketing Cooperative
- Producer's and Buyers Coop

Local Agricultural Industry Trends

Agriculture is an important economic force in Chippewa County. Figure 5 illustrates where the farm fields are located in Chippewa County.

Figure 5 - Farmland in Chippewa County



Source: 2005 FSA, CLU

Produced by: West Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission

County’s Top Commodities

Changes in agriculture due to socio-economic conditions and the development pressures to convert agricultural land to other uses can have profound impacts in Chippewa County and surrounding communities. Chippewa County agriculture is diverse as the farming community produces a variety of products. Dairy, field crops, poultry and livestock are the main commodities, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – Chippewa County’s Top Commodities (Sales by Dollar Value, 2012)

Milk	\$105.6 million
Grain	\$86.2 million
Poultry & eggs	\$24.4 million
Cattle & calves	\$24.1 million
Hay & other crops	\$6.2 million

Source: University of Wisconsin-Extension

County Farms and Average Acres

Table 5 indicates the changes that have occurred with average farm size and number of farms from 2002 to 2012 in Farmland Preservation Plan

Chippewa County, Wisconsin, and the U.S. Between 2002 to 2007, there was a decline in the number of farms and the average acres. However, between 2007 and 2012, the number of farms in Chippewa County increased, while the state and national trends indicated a decrease. Noteworthy, is that the average acres for Chippewa County declined from 2002 to 2012, but the state and national figures showed a decrease from 2002 to 2007 and then an increase from 2007 to 2012. The legal definition of a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were, or normally would be, produced and sold during the census year.

Table 5 – Farm and Acres Comparison

	2002		2007		2012		% Change from 2002 -2012	
	Farms	Acres	Farms	Acres	Farms	Acres	Farms	Acres
Chippewa County	1,621	231	1,575	224	1,757	219	8.39 %	-5.19 %
Wisconsin	77,131	204	78,463	194	69,754	209	-9.56 %	2.45 %
United States	2,128,982	441	2,204,792	418	2,109,303	434	-0.92 %	-1.58 %

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

County Farm Ownership

Farms in Chippewa County tend to be individual or family owned. A small portion is also owned by a partnership. This can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 – Farm Ownership

Ownership	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012
Individual/Family Farms	1,476	1,395	1,571	1,500	1,401	1,578
Partnership	138	131	109	84	119	115
Corporation – Family	30	41	47	33	48	47
Corporation – Other	1	2	1	3	4	1
Other (Co-op, Trust, etc.)	2	2	6	1	3	16

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

County Farm Parcels and Total Acres of Farmland

Table 7 – County Farm Parcels and Total Acres

TOWNS	Parcels of Farmland				Acres of Farmland				Percent
	2002	2007	2012	Change	2002	2007	2012	Change	
Anson	459	451	464	5	11,535	11,362	11,372	-163	-1.41%
Arthur	526	508	519	-7	12,786	12,223	12,401	-385	-3.01%
Auburn	496	527	556	60	13,117	12,531	12,337	-780	-5.95%
Birch Creek	194	194	210	16	4,205	4,249	4,409	204	4.85%
Bloomer	736	775	782	46	18,850	19,119	18,988	138	0.73%
Cleveland	371	375*	390	19	7,405	6,135	6,872	-533	-7.20%
Colburn	660	670	699	39	15,598	16,106	16,134	536	3.44%
Cooks Valley	553	588	593	40	15,080	15,032	15,033	-47	-0.31%
Delmar	666	679	696	30	19,236	19,296	19,365	129	0.67%
Eagle Point	676	677	718	42	18,254	17,683	16,593	-1,661	-9.10%
Edson	776	798	848	72	23,016	23,530	23,749	733	3.18%
Estella	280	291	304	24	5,422	5,245	5,286	-136	-2.51%
Goetz	395	418	446	51	11,040	11,520	11,281	241	2.18%
Hallie	192	110	109	-83	4,256	2,630	2,553	-1,703	-40.01%
Howard	559	559	586	27	14,583	13,970	13,934	-649	-4.45%
Lafayette	398	412	358	-40	10,506	10,226	7,808	-2,698	-25.68%
Lake Holcombe	126	129	132	6	2,631	2,609	2,639	8	0.30%

Ruby	373	375	411	38	10,104	9,601	9,961	-143	-1.42%
Sampson	352	358	384	32	9,240	8,748	9,087	-153	-1.66%
Sigel	440	487	508	68	10,302	10,343	10,505	203	1.97%
Tilden	613	629	650	37	16,157	16,111	16,125	-32	-0.20%
Wheaton	831	851	875	44	21,609	21,114	20,976	-633	-2.93%
Woodmohr	623	651	626	3	17,718	17,621	16,092	-1,626	-9.18%
Total	11,295	11,137	11,864	569	292,650	287,004	283,500	-9,150	-3.13%
VILLAGES									
Boyd	34	34	34	0	822	819	816	-6	-0.73%
Cadott	33	29	31	-2	840	707	714	-126	-15.00%
Lake Hallie	n/a	148	119	-29	n/a	1,331	1,300	-31	-2.33%
New Auburn	42	41	43	1	986	894	897	-89	-9.03%
Total	109	252	227	-30	2,648	3,751	3,727	1,079	40.75%
CITIES									
Bloomer	27	30	33	6	117	111	138	21	17.95%
Chippewa Falls	4	6	10	6	99	102	148	49	49.49%
Cornell	16	14	13	-3	188	149	146	-42	-22.34%
Eau Claire	0	1	2	2	0	134	134	0	0.00%
Stanley	21	19	19	-2	342	296	299	-43	-12.57%
Total	68	70	77	9	746	792	783	37	4.96%
COUNTY TOTAL	11,472	11,459	12,168	548	296,044	291,547	288,010	-8,034	-2.71%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 7 shows that from 2002 to 2012, Chippewa County gained 548 parcels assessed as agricultural. But, the total acres assessed as agricultural decreased by roughly 8,000, which represents a 2.71% decrease. This table shows all the parcels that were determined to be active working farmlands during the time period that the County was assessed. For assessment purposes, to be distinguished, as active farmlands, the assessor must visually see evidence that the land is actively being farmed.

Agricultural Land Transactions

Table 8 – Agricultural Land Transactions

Year	Total of all Agricultural land			Agricultural land continuing in Agricultural uses			Agricultural land being diverted to other uses			% of Agricultural land sold and converted to nonagricultural use
	Number of transactions	Acres sold	Dollars per acre	Number of transactions	Acres sold	Dollars per acre	Number of transactions	Acres sold	Dollars per acre	
2003	84	5492	1598	56	4573	1460	28	919	2284	16.73%
2004	81	4961	1854	60	4386	1886	21	575	1610	11.59%
2005	52	2687	2464	35	1794	2178	17	893	3038	33.23%
2006	33	2573	1983	26	2149	1838	7	424	2718	16.48%
2007	51	3571	2150	48	3478	2084	3	93	4590	2.60%
2008	51	3571	2150	48	3478	2084	3	93	4590	2.60%
2009	50	3607	2978	48	3498	2717	2	109	11370	3.02%
2010	35	2166	3061	34	2154	3065	1	12	2353	0.55%
2011	52	3704	2476	50	3624	2494	2	80	1655	2.16%
2012	56	3374	3038	56	3374	3038	-	-	-	0.00%

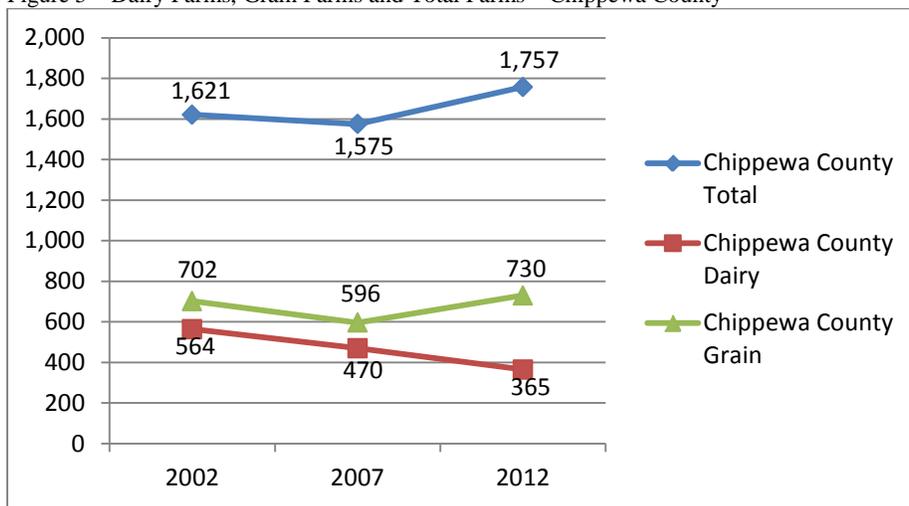
2013	49	2443	3510	48	2408	3474	1	35	6000	1.43%
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Table 8 indicates the amount of Chippewa County agricultural land that was sold from 2003 to 2013. We can see that, for the most part, agricultural land being sold remains in agricultural use. From 2003 to 2013, an average of 46 transactions occurred per year for agricultural land continuing in agricultural use. This equates to approximately 69 acres per transaction for roughly \$2,393/acre. On the other hand, land which was converted from agricultural use to another use saw approximately 9 transactions per year. This equates to approximately 38 acres per transaction for roughly \$4,021/acre.

Dairy Farms

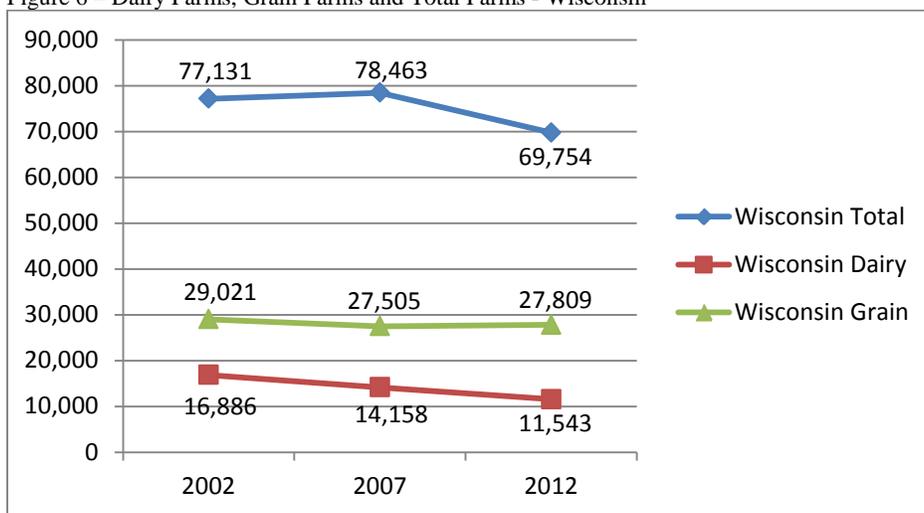
In 2002, Chippewa County had 564 dairy farms, which represented approximately 35% of the total farms. In 2012, the percentage dropped to 21%. The local trend appears to be following the state trend for dairy farms, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 5 – Dairy Farms, Grain Farms and Total Farms – Chippewa County



Source: 2002-2012 US Census of Agricultural

Figure 6 – Dairy Farms, Grain Farms and Total Farms - Wisconsin



Source: 2002-2012 US Census of Agricultural

Following the trend of the number of farms, is a decrease in number of cows. However, there was a substantial jump in dairy industry production from 2002 to 2012 as shown in Table 10. As you can see, Chippewa County

had a large productivity gain (3,100 pounds per cow per year) during the ten year span.

Table 10 – Dairy Farm Information

Place	Number of Cows	Production (1,000 lbs)	Productivity (lbs/cow/year)	Average Herd Size
2002				
Chippewa County	33,700	522,350	15,500	59
Northwest District (includes Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Rusk, Polk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties)	104,000	1,666,630	16,025	62
State	1,266,950	21,849,220	17,246	71
2007				
Chippewa County	32,500	542,750	16,700	70
Northwest District (includes Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Rusk, Polk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties)	95,000	1,605,590	16,901	72
State	1,247,000	24,080,000	19,310	90
2012				
Chippewa County	30,000	558,000	18,600	79
Northwest District (includes Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Rusk, Polk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties)	93,000	1,717,790	18,470	90
State	1,270,000	27,224,000	21,436	110
Net Change 2002-2012				
Chippewa County	-3,700	35,650	3,100	20
Northwest District (includes Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Rusk, Polk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties)	-11,000	51,160	2,445	28
State	3,050	5,374,780	4,190	39

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Chippewa County ranks in the top ten of Wisconsin counties in forage and hay production (62,650 acres), oats for grain (4,136 acres), soybeans for beans (49,282 acres), corn for grain (91,608 acres) and corn silage production (22,380 acres). Of these figures the most notable are for corn grain and soybeans, which saw increases in acres from 2007 to 2012 of 20% and 93%, respectively. The increase in corn for grain can be attributed to the Ace Ethanol Plant, which was the first large-scale production plant in Wisconsin. The increase in soybeans can be attributed to the new regional food grade soybean processing facility located in the City of Bloomer. This particular facility allowed the expansion of Wisconsin's capacity to export food grade soybeans and other specialty grains to developing world markets.

The emergence of smaller farms throughout the County has allowed individual property owners to focus on specialty items such as organic produce, vineyards for the production of wine, smaller vegetable and fruit stands and orchards. To aid in this process, Chippewa Falls and Stanley have weekly farmer's markets during the harvest seasons, which allows the uniqueness of their individual businesses to be showcased.

Table 11 – Farm Size

Farm Size (Acres)	Chippewa – 2007	Chippewa – 2012	Percentage
1 to 9	64	100	56%
10 to 49	248	418	69%
50 to 179	650	643	-1%
180 to 499	476	428	-10%
500 to 999	94	104	11%
1,000 or more	43	64	49%
Total	1,448	1,532	6%

Economics of Agriculture

Besides a source for produce, there is a large dependence on agriculture in Chippewa County. Shown in Table 11, agriculture pays approximately \$7.8 million each year in taxes to government agencies which provide services to residents.

Table 12 – Taxes Paid by Agriculture

Sales tax	\$1.4 million
Income tax	\$2.7 million
Property tax	\$1.9 million
Other	\$1.8 million

Taxes Paid by Agriculture

Source: University of Wisconsin-Extension

Agriculture provides a wealth of employment opportunities to Chippewa County residents. According to the 2014 Chippewa County Agriculture Report, over 3,387 jobs were provided by agriculture, which equates to about ten (10) percent of the County's work force of 33,729. Chippewa County agriculture accounts for \$205 million, or 9.2 percent of the county's total income.

Production jobs include farm owners and managers and farm employees. Agricultural service jobs include veterinarians, crop and livestock consultants, feed, fuel and other crop input suppliers, farm machinery dealers, barn builders and agricultural lenders, to name a few. Processing jobs include those employed in food processing and other value-added industries that support food processors. Every job in agriculture generates an additional 0.56 jobs in the county.

Agriculture stimulates economic activity in Chippewa County as agriculture generates almost \$618 million in economic activity, accounting for about 12 percent of Chippewa County's total economic activity. Every dollar of sales of agricultural products generates an additional \$0.37 of economic activity in other parts of the Chippewa County economy.

Agriculture products generate about \$450 million, which includes the sale of all farm products and value-added products. Purchases of agricultural needs and services, including fuel, fertilizer, feed, farm equipment, veterinary services, and crop consultants, create another \$124 million in economic activity. People who work in agriculture-related businesses then spend their earnings, resulting in an additional \$44 million of economic activity.

Dairy is the major agricultural industry in Chippewa County. On-farm production and milk sales account for \$165 million. The processing of the milk into dairy products generates another \$238 million. Of special note:

- Five plants process dairy products
 - Associated Milk Producers Inc in Jim Falls, Wisconsin buys milk from producers.
 - Connell's Orchard and Olson's make homemade ice cream.
 - Yellowstone Cheese in Cadott, Wisconsin buys milk from producers
 - Water's Edge In Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin makes homemade cheese curds.
- On-farm milk production accounts for 979 jobs, while dairy processing accounts for an additional 672 jobs.
- At the county level, each dairy cow generates \$4,562 in on-farm sales to producers.
- At the state level, each dairy cow generates over \$34,000 in total sales

Chippewa County sales of Christmas trees, fruits and vegetables, greenhouse, nursery and floriculture products total just over \$4 million. Local food sales account for approximately \$900,000 to the local economy. More and more Chippewa County farmers sell directly to consumers from roadside stands, farmer's markets, auctions and pick-your-own operations.

Conflicts and threats to Agriculture

The conflicts and threats to agriculture in Chippewa County are almost identical to what the region, state and nation are experiencing. Specifically, they are as follows:

- Increased land prices
- Loss of raw land and the increase of parcel fragmentation of productive farm lands used to support working farms.
- Increased traffic and road congestion that affect the movement of farm equipment and road safety.
- Increased potential for urban/rural land use conflicts including agriculturally related nuisance complaints such as noise, dust, odor, agricultural runoff, and non-point pollution.
- Increased concern over land access, recreational trespassing and wildlife management such as deer and nuisance species.

Farmland Protection Tools

The protection of farmland in Chippewa County is very limited at this point in time. The only tools available are the creation or expansion of Agricultural Enterprise Areas or through the individual property owner's decision not to sell the land for development purposes. As previously mentioned, there are only a small fraction of the existing towns that have zoning regulations. And even with the current zoning regulations, new districts would need to be developed in order to comply with the state minimum standards for a farmland preservation zoning district.

Consistency with Local Plans

Chippewa County has 23 towns, which of only 6 have adopted the Chippewa County Zoning Ordinance. One other town, the Town of Bloomer, was granted the authority by the County Board to adopt a Town Zoning Ordinance. Other towns have shown interest in some form of zoning, but have not acted on any type of formal adoption. The county also administers a shoreland and floodplain ordinance throughout all of the un-incorporated areas, but neither ordinance contains designations for "land uses".

In the beginning of the Comprehensive Planning Process, Chippewa County decided to institute a "bottom up" design to the planning process for the county's comprehensive plan. This decision was made after some of the local towns showed a concern in regards to the future land use maps and how consistency could be gained between the two plans. So in terms of future land use, all the decisions and maps created were made at the town level. The maps created were incorporated into the County Future Land Use Map, but only after they were approved at the town level.

The county utilized the existing future land use maps of those towns and municipalities who completed such plans

for the base of the farmland preservation mapping criteria. Any land, which was designated for development be it either commercial, industrial or residential, was removed from the farmland planning maps. In case there is a discrepancy regarding non-agricultural development between the future land use maps of the county and town comprehensive plans, the farmland preservation plan maps would supersede.

If a town decides to complete a comprehensive plan in the future, the county will assist in providing the criteria that was utilized to develop the farmland preservation plan maps as a base for developing their future land use map. In an effort to complete the county's future land use map the towns that decided to not participate in comprehensive planning were marked as "town based planning." This designation means that all decisions specifically concerning land use will be made at the town level.

Farmland Preservation Mapping Criteria

Below is an overview of the mapping criteria utilized to establish the farmland preservation areas in Chippewa County. The Farmland Preservation Mapping requirements are listed in Wisconsin State Statutes 91.10(1)(e).

- Cut 1 Remove any parcel located within the municipal boundaries of an incorporated city or village.
Shapefile: (step1_cities_villages.shp)
- Cut 2 Remove any parcel located within the boundaries of the Eau Claire Sewer Water Service Area.
Shapefile: (step2_ec_sewer_service.shp)
- Cut 3 Remove any parcel that is public land owned by a governmental entity.
Shapefile: (step3_publicly_owned_andrr_parcels.shp)
- Cut 4 Remove any parcel that has an Assessor's Code that has 50% of the parcel area assessed as either residential or commercial or manufacturing.
Shapefile: (step4_assessment_codes_1-3_removed.shp)
- Cut 5 Remove any parcel that is <5.0 acres that is not assessed as agricultural.
Shapefile: (step5_less_than_5_acres_not_ag.shp)
- Cut 6 Remove any parcel that is zoned under County Comprehensive Zoning that is not zoned agricultural or conservancy.
Shapefile: (step6_county_zoning_removed2.shp)
- Cut 7 Remove any parcel that is identified on a Town Comprehensive Plan future land use map that is mapped as manufacturing, industrial, commercial or residential.
Shapefile: (step7_future_land_use_designations_removed.shp)
Note: Do not include parcels identified as "recreational" under this cut.

The resulting map coverage representing the collective sum of cuts 1- 7 equals the base Farmland Preservation Area. This base Farmland Preservation Area will then be adjusted to account for the existing Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA's), that have been established under WI Stats., Chapter 91.

- Adjust 1 - Add back in **all** parcels that were identified as Farmland Preservation parcels in the original Cadott, Bloomer, and Dunn County/Cooks Valley AEA's that may have been eliminated under Cuts 1-7. This will serve to maintain the integrity of the original AEA maps that have been adopted.
Shapefile: (Small_parcels_in_existing_AEAs_not_meeting_the_seven_qualifications.shp)
Note: In cases of AEA expansion, the core mapping rules will apply to any areas of proposed AEA area expansion.

The final map coverage is a culmination of Cuts 1-7 plus the Adjust 1.
Shapefile: (final.shp)

Farmland Preservation Plan Maintenance and Amendments

It is anticipated that the Farmland Preservation Planning will initiate discussions for the local municipalities and towns to revisit and potentially revise their comprehensive plans. These revisions will allow the county to review the Farmland Preservation Plan and make the necessary revisions to keep consistency between the plans. At a maximum, the County's farmland preservation plan is to be reviewed and updated at least once every ten (10) years per Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal # 1: Maintain the capacity of the land to support productive forests and agricultural working lands to sustain food, fiber, and renewable energy production.

Objectives:

1. Manage soil quality to maintain the land's capacity to support sustained production.
2. Measure and monitor soil quality using soil organic matter, carbon content, moisture holding capacity, fertility, and current erosion rates.
3. Identify and preserve designated blocks of working lands in a voluntary program in cooperation with private land-owners, which will help to maintain an adequate landmass to support agricultural and forestry operations that are production-oriented and that contribute to the County's economy.
 - (a) Increase the participation rate in the existing Bloomer and Cadott AEA's.
 - (b) Continue to seek approval from Wisconsin DATCP for the expansion of the existing AEA's
4. Limit the fragmentation and urban development of productive forests and agricultural working lands.
 - (a) Encourage the development of a farmland preservation zoning district for the local zoning ordinances.
5. Manage the extent of fragmentation and urban development through the adoption and use of rural density standards and land division ordinances, as established by towns in cooperation with the County.
 - (a) Manage the type and location of new development in unincorporated areas through the adoption and use of:
 - (1) Voluntary land conservation agreements developed with interested landowners.
 - (2) Zoning districts as established by towns in cooperation with the County.
 - (3) The development of Cluster or Conservation Subdivision Regulations at the County, Town and Municipality levels.
 - (b) As a priority, seek to protect those productive forest and agricultural lands that meet the farmland preservation planning criteria.

Goal # 2: Encourage future urban development to occur within incorporated municipalities; or in designated urban service areas where development and associated public services have been planned by a responsible municipality.

Objectives:

1. Identify the location, size, and boundaries of urban service areas through the use of public planning processes initiated by the towns, cities, or villages.
2. Work in conjunction with the cities and villages to acknowledge the farmland preservation planning criteria and to help drive development around those lands that meet the minimum criteria.

3. Support local decisions and regulations that reduce potential conflicts between agriculture and other land uses.

Goal # 3: Restore the condition, environmental functions, and productive capacity of abandoned or degraded lands.

Objective:

1. Reclaim and revegetate abandoned farmland, surface mined lands, and brownfields to:
 - (a) Produce biomass for energy production.
 - (b) Reestablish native plant communities through planting or natural progression.

Goal #4: Promote agriculture and agricultural enterprises, so that farming remains economically viable.

Objectives:

1. Preserve the agricultural land and water base within the county.
2. Preserve and build upon existing agri-business relationships that currently exist between the farm producers, the area agricultural processors, and the local businesses that service the agricultural infrastructure.
3. Pursue new business ventures that will build the economy and advance state and local development goals.