

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: DATCP designates agriculture enterprise areas in Douglas, Buffalo counties

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MADISON, Wis. – This year, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) designated more than 61,000 acres in Buffalo and Douglas counties as agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs). With these additions, the state now has 45 AEAs totaling more than 1.5 million acres located in parts of 126 towns and 30 counties, including the Bad River Reservation.

AEA designations are important to Wisconsin's agricultural future and support local farmland protection goals, the agricultural economy, environmental efforts, and rural prosperity. Landowners within designated AEAs are eligible to enter into voluntary farmland preservation agreements committing all or a portion of their farm to agricultural use and maintaining state soil and water conservation standards. In return, they may be eligible to claim the annual farmland preservation tax credit.

The 2022 AEAs include:

- Northern Douglas County AEA, Douglas County: Includes more than 32,000 acres in the towns of Parkland, Amnicon, Cloverland, Lakeside, Maple, and the Village of Poplar. Local governments and partners joined 12 landowners to petition for designation of this AEA. This is the first AEA in Douglas County and the first eligible area for the county's landowners to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program since the program was updated in 2009. Petitioners in this AEA hope to promote a diverse agricultural community and provide

opportunities for farmers and non-farming landowners to build relationships.
Local contact: Ashley Vande Voort, land conservationist, (715) 395-1266

- Montana Society for Responsible Land Use AEA, Buffalo County: Includes more than 29,000 acres in the Town of Montana. Local government and partners joined 29 landowners to petition for designation of Buffalo County's first AEA. Petitioners hope to empower farmers and landowners to access conservation tools and programs supporting farm profitability and community conservation. Local contact: Cale Severson, county conservationist, (608) 685-6262

Local communities can voluntarily pursue designation of an AEA by submitting a petition to DATCP. Through this designation, the community can encourage continued agricultural production and investment in the agricultural economy.

DATCP has the authority to designate up to two million acres of AEAs. For more information about the program or how to petition for a new or expand an existing AEA, visit <http://farmlandpreservation.wi.gov>.