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Wisconsin Women in Conservation: October Women's Learning Circles offer conservation education in beautiful venues

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Chippewa Falls, WI – As Color Season sweeps across the state this October, Wisconsin Women in Conservation (WiWiC) is offering free "Harvest Your Conservation Potential" Learning Circles at inspiring venues with great views. All women farmers, landowners and conservationists are welcome, as are women who are contemplating purchasing land. WiWiC is working to build regional networks of women interested in land stewardship, and the majority of each event will be dedicated to a peer-to-peer networking time. Registration is FREE at WiWiC.org under Events.

This Friday, October 7, 3:30 to 6:30pm is a Learning Circle at the historic Creamery Inn near Menomonie. Participants will take part in a small prairie burn led by landowner Kathy Ruggles, Prairie Enthusiasts Board Member and Chippewa Savannas Chapter Burn Boss.

"We'll walk the little prairie on the west end of our home place, since it is a good size for people to actually see what is going on. If it hasn't rained, we'll burn something," said Ruggles. "A walk into our lowland woods would be pretty and educational in terms of the grants we obtained and the restoration process."

Upcoming "Harvest Your Conservation Potential" Learning Circle Dates

North West Region, Oct. 7, 3:30-6:30pm, The Creamery Inn, Downsville

Central Region, Oct. 13, 1-4pm, Schmeeckle Reserve, Stevens Point

South East Region, Oct. 25, 12-3pm, River Bend Nature Center, Racine

Local conservation professionals will be present at each gathering to train participants on the value of procuring a Conservation, Forestry, or Grazing Plan. WiWiC provides grants for participants to have professional plans prepared.

“A conservation plan is very important as it is the first step in managing natural resources on the landscape while helping landowner’s reach their conservation objectives for their land,” said Jennifer Roetter, who is a Resource Conservationist with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA) in Durand. “Having a conservation plan developed helps NRCS identify if a landowner qualifies for financial assistance through USDA Farm Bill programs.” Roetter led a soil health demonstration at a September Learning Circle in Stockholm.

WiWiC is a state-wide collaborative effort led by the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute in partnership with Wisconsin Farmers Union, Renewing the Countryside and Marbleseed (formerly MOSES). A three-year multi-faceted project funded by the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), WiWiC brings together Wisconsin women landowners to connect and learn about conservation practices, resources, and funding opportunities.

In addition to Field Days, WiWiC also provides mentorship to women landowners and farmers who want to increase conservation practices on their properties – and FREE professionally-prepared Conservation Plans. Interested parties can subscribe to a statewide listserv, “The Buzz” monthly newsletter and the “Queen Bee Sessions” podcast on the website as well.