

Dear Farmer and/or Landowner,

The Dry Run Farmer-Led Watershed Council is pleased to announce our incentive program for 2024 practices. Due to its effectiveness and popularity, we are continuing our buffer program and increasing the payment for the first acre.

In 2023 our farmers and cooperating landowners made quite an impact. Our council hosted 8 farmer events and our coordinator presented to thousands of non-farmers at the St. Croix Farm-City day and the Clean Water Forum about how farmers in our watershed are stewarding the land and water for the community. **Farmers in the watershed received just over \$19,000 of payments in 2023** for planting over 1600 acres of cover crops and converting less profitable stream-adjacent cropland to perennial roots. These practices kept over 530,000 pounds of soil on local fields and out of local ditches and the Dry Run stream.

This year, farmers in the area have agreed to expand the incentive options:

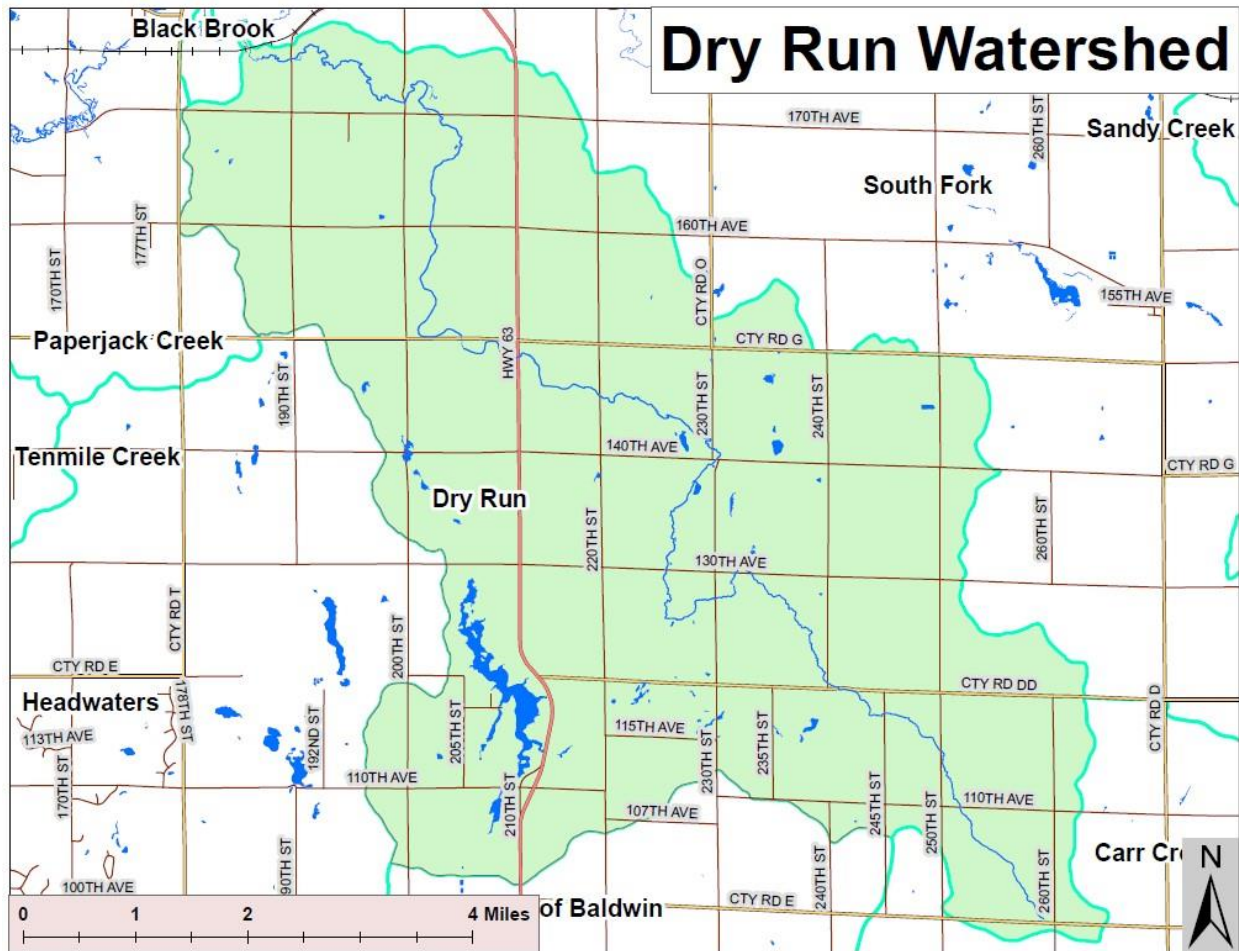
- The buffer incentive is still there for any cropland adjacent to the Dry Run with payment for the 1<sup>st</sup> acre increased to **\$1,000 per acre for the first acre** and \$650 for every acre after that. If there is another sensitive area you'd like to buffer (e.g., adjacent to a sinkhole), apply and we will review the site.
- There is also a higher payment rate for any farmer in the watershed who wants to try cover crops for the first time on 20 acres to see how well they perform.
  - If you are interested in providing more information including your USDA ID numbers, Farmers for Soil Health are able to provide \$25/acre for cover crops, upping your payment to \$55/acre for first-time 20 acres or \$35/acre for acres beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> 20 or for farmers with cover crop experience.
- A waterway payment for waterways installed without funding assistance from other sources of \$2/linear foot. Design & technical assistance available through St. Croix County.
- A flexible option for upgrading your equipment or management to cover costs up to \$1,000 per applicant. This could be to help with planter upgrades that will allow for reduced tillage or other potential practices you might be interested in that would improve your farm and soil health.

If you want to get signed up or have logistical questions, contact our coordinator, Tara Daun  
715-492-0329 [tdaun@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:tdaun@wisconsinfarmersunion.com)

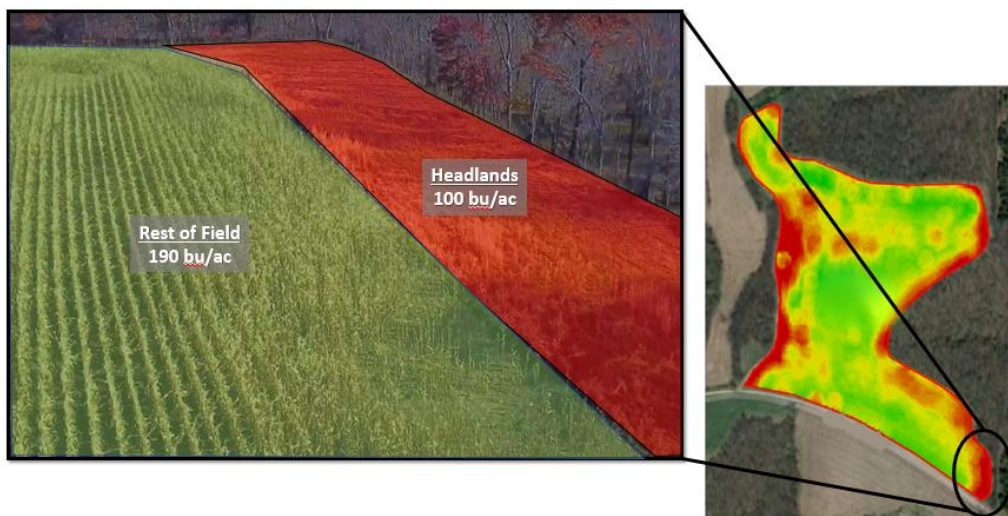
If you'd like to participate in the decision-making process of the Dry Run Farmer-Led Council, any farmers in or adjacent to the Dry Run watershed are welcome to come to meetings and have an equal say at the table as all farmers present. To learn about our next meeting, contact our coordinator, Tara Daun, or come to the Rooster Roadhouse at 11:00 on Wednesday February 21<sup>st</sup>.

Thank you for your time.





“Corn is not a good plan for brush control” – Farmer, Joe Bragger



Assuming \$550/acre in production costs before rent and \$4.60/bu of corn, these headlands lost the farmer \$90/acre last year. Putting them into a grass strip instead of corn reduces those losses and increases total farm profitability.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_: **Stream-adjacent Cropland Buffer (\$1,000 for the first acre per applicant, \$650 for every acre after that)**

**Location of proposed buffer:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please provide address or Township, Range, Section location)

**Estimated area:** \_\_\_\_\_ feet along the waterway x \_\_\_\_\_ feet wide = \_\_\_\_\_ square feet

By receiving funds from this program, you are agreeing to maintain the area for which you are receiving payment in perennial cover after establishment in 2024 through the harvest season of 2026. If you till the site or plant a non-perennial crop before January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2027 you will be asked reimburse the Farmer-Led Watershed Council, all of the funds received for this buffer. No payments are guaranteed until site approved by the council or approved representative.

\_\_\_\_\_: **First-Time 20 acres Cover Cropper (\$30/acre)**

This incentive is for farmers who have not planted cover crops before. \$30 covers the cost of seed and termination so you can minimize risk of trying cover crops and have the opportunity to see the benefit to your farm.

**Number of acres for fall-seeded cover crops:** \_\_\_\_\_

Cover crop(s) species planted \_\_\_\_\_ rate \_\_\_\_\_ method of planting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Mark here if you're interested in providing additional information about your cover-cropped acres for Farmers for Soil Health, which is offering a total payment of \$50 per acre over three years (Year 1: \$25, Year 2: \$15, and Year 3: \$10).

\_\_\_\_\_: **Cover Crops (\$10/acre)**

**Number of acres for fall-seeded cover crops:** \_\_\_\_\_

Cover crop(s) species planted \_\_\_\_\_ rate \_\_\_\_\_ method of planting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_: **Conservation Upgrade (up to \$1,000 per farm)**

Is there a practice you know you'd like to do but could use some funding to help get it done? This is a flexible option, but an example might be upgrading your planter to start no-tilling.

**Activity you would use funding for:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_: **Grassed Waterway Establishment (\$2/linear foot)**

**Location of proposed waterway:** \_\_\_\_\_ (please provide address or Township, Range, Section location)

**Estimated length:** \_\_\_\_\_ feet

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

By applying for incentive payment for these activities you are agreeing that you are not receiving incentive payments for the same activity on the same acres from another program (e.g., NRCS). This program is developed to assist in adoption of new conservation practices and reduce risk to farmers for the first three years of implementing the practice on each field. It is not meant to subsidize responsible management indefinitely. By signing below, you agree that you will not apply for incentive funds to pay for the same practice on the same acres for a fourth year.

A picture of this form filled out can be emailed to [tdaun@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:tdaun@wisconsinfarmersunion.com) or mailed back to

St. Croix County Land & Water Conservation Department  
1960 8th Avenue, Suite 140  
Baldwin, WI 54002



This program is completely voluntary and funded by the Dry Run Farmer-Led Watershed Council. Funding is provided by a Wisconsin Farmers Union water quality grant and our incentive program is supported through a grant with the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection. We are partnering with the St. Croix County Land and Water Department for technical expertise and resources.



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