



Sawyer County

Agenda

Economic Development & UW Extension Committee Meeting
Monday, April 12, 2021 @ 8:30 AM
Assembly Room/Virtual Meeting

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. The public is **strongly encouraged** to access the public meeting remotely due to public health and safety concerns. To view or participate in the **virtual meeting** from a computer, iPad, or Android device please go to <https://zoom.us/j/97642007840>. You can also use the dial in number for listening only at 1-312-626-6799 with the Webinar ID: 976 4200 7840. If additional assistance is needed please contact the County Clerk's Office at 715-634-4866 prior to the meeting.
- b. If you are on a computer, click the "Raise Hand" button and wait to be recognized.
- c. If you are on a telephone, dial *9 and wait to be recognized.

2. ROLL CALL

3. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS LAW

4. MEETING AGENDA

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. At this time, members of the public will be given the opportunity to address the Committee on items not on the agenda. Please adhere to the following when addressing the Committee:
 - Comments will be limited to 3 minutes or less per individual.
 - Comments should be directed to the Committee as a whole and not directed to individual Committee members.
 - The Committee cannot respond to your comments during this time.
 - Please sign in and fill out a public comment sheet if you wish to speak on an item.

4 - 5	6. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING	a. 3.8.21 Meeting Minutes DRAFT
	7. SAWYER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL FAIR ASSOCIATION REPORT	
6 - 8	8. UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION DEPARTMENT REPORT	a. 2021 First Quarter Report UWEX
9	9. HAYWARD LAKES VISITORS & CONVENTION BUREAU	a. Hayward Lakes Marketing Report April 2021
10 - 21	10. NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT	a. 2020 Annual Report NWRPC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT- FINAL
22 - 25		b. Diversification Summit REDS - Regional Economic Diversification Summit
26 - 27	11. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION REPORT	a. Sawyer Co.LCO EDC Activity Report March 2021
	12. MOTORIZED TRAIL AND NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL REPORT	
	13. HISTORICAL SOCIETY - POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP DISCUSSION	
28 - 29	14. MISSION STATEMENT DEVELOPMENT	a. Econ Development.UWEX mission statement
	15. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS	
	16. CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS FROM CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS, OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION ONLY	

DISCLAIMER:

A quorum of the County Board of Supervisors or of any of its committees may be present at this meeting to listen and observe. Neither the Board nor any of the committees have established attendance at this meeting as an official function of the Board or committee(s) or otherwise made a determination that attendance at the meeting is necessary to carry out the Board or committee's function. The only purpose for other supervisors attending the meeting is to listen to the information presented.

Neither the Board nor any committee (other than the committee providing this notice and agenda) will take any official action with respect to this noticed meeting.

Copy sent via email to: County Clerk and News Media. Note: Any person wishing to attend whom, because of a disability, requires accommodation should call the Sawyer County Clerk's Office (715.634.4866) at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting so appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Minutes of the March 8th meeting of the Sawyer County
Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Assembly Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members Present:

- ☒ Chair: **James Schlender**
- ☒ Tom Duffy
- ☒ Jesse Boettcher – Virtual
- ☒ Stacey Hessel
- ☐ Brian Bisonette

Others Present:

Tom Hoff
Mike Coleson
Lynn Fitch
Lori Baltrusis – Virtual
Mike Gardner -- Virtual
Sherry Beckman – Virtual
Linda Zilmer - Virtual

Call to Order – Chair James Schlender called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken. Quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda

Public Comments

Minutes from previous meeting – A motion was made by Mr. Duffy to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2021, meeting; second by Ms. Hessel. Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association Report – Ms. Hessel reported that the fair social event will be held at the Sawyer County fairgrounds this spring; date has not yet been set.

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report – Ms. Baltrusis introduced herself and reported that the Area 2 Annual report will be available within the next two weeks. They are anticipating a 3% increase in the 2022 budget at this time.

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau Report – A written report was provided. Ms. Beckman reported that the live FB event continues to be successful and will be offered on a monthly basis. The May fishing opener is on as scheduled but by invite-only for in-person attendees. A local fish fry will be held for the community during the opener. Discover Wisconsin Power Sports episode will air on April 17th on Fox Sports North and KDAL Duluth.

Economic Development Report – A written report was provided. The Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation will be launching a fundraising campaign soon. Mr. Gardner reported that the anticipated American Rescue Plan may provide additional financial resources for the business community in the next few months. He will be reaching out to the Broadband representatives to see if additional resources will be allocated to Sawyer County projects. Members of this Committee want Broadband to be a focus of the EDC efforts.

Motorized and Non-Motorized Trail Report – Mr. Mrotek, Trail Coordinator for the local snowmobile alliance, reported an excellent snowmobile season for Sawyer County this year and he anticipates an equally strong ATV/UTV trail season to begin opening up this spring for our county trails.

Historical Society – A motion was made by Mr. Duffy; second by Ms. Hessel to table this topic until next meeting. Motion carried without negative vote.

Future Agenda Topics – Mr. Schlender proposed that the Committee draft a mission statement that can be distributed for review and sent on to full County Board for approval.

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee will be Monday, April 12, at 8:30 am in the Assembly Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 am

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk

DRAFT



Sawyer County - First Quarter, 2021



**4-H Program /
Community Youth
Development Educator –
Sky Holt**
Sky.holt@wisc.edu;
715-638-3237

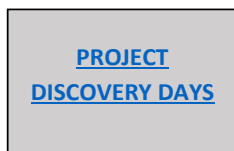


Sky continues to focus on the development and implementation of **quality programming** in Sawyer County 4-H. She has been working with club leaders on how to engage youth and volunteers in virtual and blended environments (virtual/small group in person), and in-person. She is navigating risk management and supporting opportunities to meet the needs of the youth and volunteers.

Area 2 4-H (Barron, Burnett, Rusk, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties) kicked off a series of virtual programs in 6 different project areas for youth in the 5 counties to participate in. This entire project aims to increase the awareness of young people about national 4-H curriculum being available, diversity the projects being supported by adult volunteers, and to recruit adult volunteers or older youth to offer more project-based meetings. *Projects include:*

- Animal Science (3-8 grade)
- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math)- Focus on Circuits (3-6 grade)
- Paper Art (all ages)
- Cloverbuds (K-2 grade)
- Outdoor Leadership (high school)
- Food Science (3rd grade up)

Each program meets once a month. Sawyer County (Sky) is hosting Paper Art with 9 registered participants.



**4-H Winter
Family Fun**

4-H Winter Family Fun took place in February: A program for youth and families where they **explore and engage** in winter related educational presentations and activities in order to increase their knowledge about animal adaptations and winter activities relevant in Northern Wisconsin.

Area 2, 4-H educators hosted a state **4-H Cafe event** for 40 volunteers throughout Wisconsin. Volunteers came together for conversations about their programs. This was offered as part of the virtual learning community. Plans are in the works to hold another one in May and to hold one for youth leaders in the upcoming months.

Well Connected Communities - Two youth members and one adult member of the Sawyer County Youth Fellowship (Wellconnected Communities Team) virtually attended the National 4-H Summit for Health Living, on February 12th – 15th. These attendees learned more information on how to support their communities in health inequity and how to make active community change. Youth have compiled a survey to be offered to all Sawyer County youth 8-11yrs on social and economic factors impacting them.

Sky continues work at the State level that benefits Sawyer county 4-H. She has been involved with the 4-H state movement to support youth and volunteers specifically in the project area. Sky is the co-chair for the Horse project for WI 4-H, focusing on volunteer tip/resource sheets to be given to all Horse project youth and volunteers by the end of 2021.

Financial Coaching – Continuing to offer coaching to residents with some more referrals recently for next quarter.

Rent Smart (Tenant Education) is still offered several times a month to Sawyer community members. Virtual options have made it more available and the Housing Authority is aware of the extra opportunities. Sky remains available to support families on an individual basis, if needed.



**FoodWise-
Burnett/Sawyer/Washburn
Counties**
Bridget Rongner-Coordinator
Bridget.rongner@wisc.edu; 715-635-4444
Kimberly Clark-Educator
Kim.clark@wisc.edu; 715-638-3350

The second session of virtual **StrongBodies** for Burnett County and surrounding counties began on March 1 with another large group of dedicated participants - primarily older adults - who log in twice a week for an hour of strength-training and 30 minutes of nutrition education or a presentation on local resources or topics of interest. This session's guest speakers include a food safety specialist, a dementia specialist, an Extension colleague discussing self-care, and a food science specialist. Over 70% of participants indicated they feel more connected to others, have more energy, and that it is easier to do some daily tasks; at least 50% of participants indicated that they are sleeping better, their mood is better, and they find they are eating better.

A new virtual StrongBodies session started with the LCO Nation on April 6 with the goal to get as much dedicated participation and positive feedback from this new group of participants.

FoodWise's most recent virtual nutrition lessons with Sawyer County partners include a Head Start Family Night where we discussed "Smart Snacking" with parents and staff, and a series of lessons for Winter Elementary School. We continue to work diligently to be proactive in being innovative in our virtual lessons so that we make it as easy as possible for our partners to work with us.

Kim and Bridget are beginning to work on program planning efforts for the schools in Sawyer County for this summer and next school year, giving schools options for opportunities, knowing that education may still look different in the upcoming months.



**Community Development
and Resource Educator -
Ariga Grigoryan**
ariga.grigoryan@wisc.edu; 715-638-3295

Reporting in Person – April 2021



**Agriculture Development Educator -
Kevin Schoessow**
Kevin.schoessow@wis.edu;
715-635-3506/800-528-1914

Seed to Kitchen Collaborative research project: Planning underway for the upcoming growing season. Kevin has shared the on-farm research opportunity to local producers and will be assisting with upcoming outreach and education efforts. He continues to provide information to fruit/produce and livestock farmers selling direct to consumers. There has been an abundance of virtual learning opportunities shared via our email lists, websites and Facebook page. Kevin is also providing the Horticulture state program team on feedback and updates for statewide resources and improvements to Extension Horticulture website.

You may have heard Kevin on the **Garden Talk Show** with Larry Meiller on February 12th. The topic and discussion focused on seed starting seed savings and updates on seed supply. You can access it [here](#).

Master Gardener Volunteer Program (Master Gardener Volunteer Week April 5-9th)

Due to covid the MGv volunteer training for new volunteers is still not being offered, however by fall of 2021 this should change. There have been substantial changes in the Extension MG program, and I have been active in providing feedback and assisting committees in making improvement. Kevin continues to provide support and assistance to local MGv in their mission to support Extension horticulture outreach. As in the past a focal point of that outreach with be associated with the Teaching and Display Garden at the Spooner Ag Station, and other approved educational projects. More info at <https://www.northcountrymgv.org/>

Agriculture Development

Northwest Graziers Network-This 'grassroots' (pun intended) organization in partnership with Extension, Land & Water Conservation Depts and NRCS supports dozens of small livestock farmers in Burnett, Washburn, Sawyer, Polk and Barron Counties. Extensions role is to help coordinate educational events, provide research-based information and to assist with organizational development. Kevin continues to promote and assist with virtual outreach and education and hopefully with pasture walks and in-person events in the future.

Upper Midwest Hazelnut Development Initiative - continuing to partner with Jason Fischbach, Ag Agent in Ashland/Bayfield Co. to increase outreach efforts around this new potential commercial nut crop for Wis. A virtual update meeting for NW Wis growers was held in January to promote the availability of new plant materials and encourage networking among participants. In 2021 efforts will continue to encourage more small plantings and increased awareness of this potential alternative crop. <https://www.midwesthazelnuts.org/>

Summary of Research Projects: The following are research projects that Kevin will continue to support in 2021 (tentative)

- Impacts of various cover crops and soil management practices on soil health: In partnership with the Spooner Ag Station (SARS), and the Shell Lake/Upper Yellow River Watershed Farmer-Led Council. Site located at SARS.
- Incorporating warm season forage grass species in managed grazing: In partnership with Yoana Newman, Extension Forage Specialist at UW-River Falls, Northwest Graziers Network and the Farmer-Led Council. Site located at Black Creek Bison Ranch, west of Spooner in Burnett Co.
- Adaptive Nitrogen Management Strategies for Corn: In partnership with UW-Extension Soil Fertility Specialist Dr. Carrie Laboski. Local producer and on-farm site TBD. <https://npketc.soils.wisc.edu/>
- Seed to Kitchen Collaborative organic vegetable variety research project to support local food systems: In partnership with Dr. Julie Dawson, UW-Extension Urban Agriculture and Local Food System Specialist. Site located at SARS <https://seedtokitchen.horticulture.wisc.edu/>



Area Extension Director - Lori Baltrusis

Lori.baltrusis@wis.edu; 715-295-4112

The Area 2 Annual Report can be found [here](#), and you are invited to reflect on the year with us.

April 2021
Hayward Lakes VCB Marketing Report

Let's Talk Hayward Facebook "live"- John Myhre and Sherry co-hosted the third episode on March 19th. Guests included Mike Best (spring fishing), Jim Onarheim (lodging and things to do) and Matt Leahy (spring fishing). Next show to air is on April 15th at 6:30 pm with experts on ATVing and fishing. Reached over 9,500 Facebook fans.

WI Indian Head Country's Governors Fishing Opener- Volunteer sign-up sheet. The DNR will not be able to donate the fish so we are purchasing. We are looking for businesses to donate bottles of liquor for a couple auction coolers. We also need 175 promo items for each goodie bag. Cash donations or auction items valued at \$25.00 or higher. Gift certificates are also welcome but must be valued at \$100 and no conditions. World Class Expo and Free Fish Fry. Several booth displays and native American drummers and dancers will perform.

NW WI ITBEC-updating the ATV and Snowmobile Corridor map. Estimated new maps arrival by July.

Snap A Selfie Snowmobile Contest-Contest concluded on March 1st. We reached over 194,000 friends and fans on *Facebook* and *Instagram* since December 16th. Snowmobile maps requests were up 62% compared to the same time last year. 88% of the businesses that returned the survey reported snowmobile business was up this winter compared to the previous season. 55% saw a direct benefit from the promotion. Sherry will apply for a second year.

Videography-hired Beau Peterson Photography to produce 30 second videos highlighting properties to use on social media. We will visit each member business. Two videos have been posted on Facebook and Instagram. Reached new followers.

Wisconsin Department of Tourism: HLVCB staff are enrolled in a series of virtual programs. Four ½ day programs covering research, marketing, public relations and more.

Sport Shows: Attended the virtual Canoecopia on March 12-14th. Includes "live" chat times, video, virtual vacation guide and area photography. 360 visits with 62 vacation guide requests generated from the show. Usually hand out 250. First in person show will be the Wisconsin State Fair on August 5-15th.

Discover Wisconsin-Power Sports episode will air on April 17th on Fox Sports North and KDAL Duluth. Both ATVing and Snowmobiling will be highlighted. Episode was a joint episode with the Superior/Douglas County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau.

PR:

Bestuscasinos.org- Sevenwinds Casino, Lodge & Convention Center is a Must Visit Gaming Destination. March 21, 2021.

Thrillist-Ice Caves and Snowy Trails Await in Your Personal Winter Playground. Hall of Fame, Birkie, Hatchery Creek loop, Angry Minnow and Main Street Tacos. February 9, 2021

MSPMAG.com Destination: Hayward. Main Street, Birkie and Hall of Fame. March 7, 2021

Charlie Berens Comedian- Park Theater was mentioned in Facebook bit, March 2021

WTMJ Radio- Travel WI-Breweries Angry Minnow, February 24, 2021

KBJR TV- Choose Sawyer County as Your Forever Home, January 28, 2021

Daily Wander Newsletter-Stay on a Private Island With These Rentals and Villas- highlights Birchwood's historic Stout's Island Lodge on Red Cedar Lake and Lake Winter's secluded VRBO private island. March 12, 2021

John Gillispie Woods and Waters TV Show-Ice Fishing with Steve Jensen in Stone Lake Feb. 12th, 2021

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

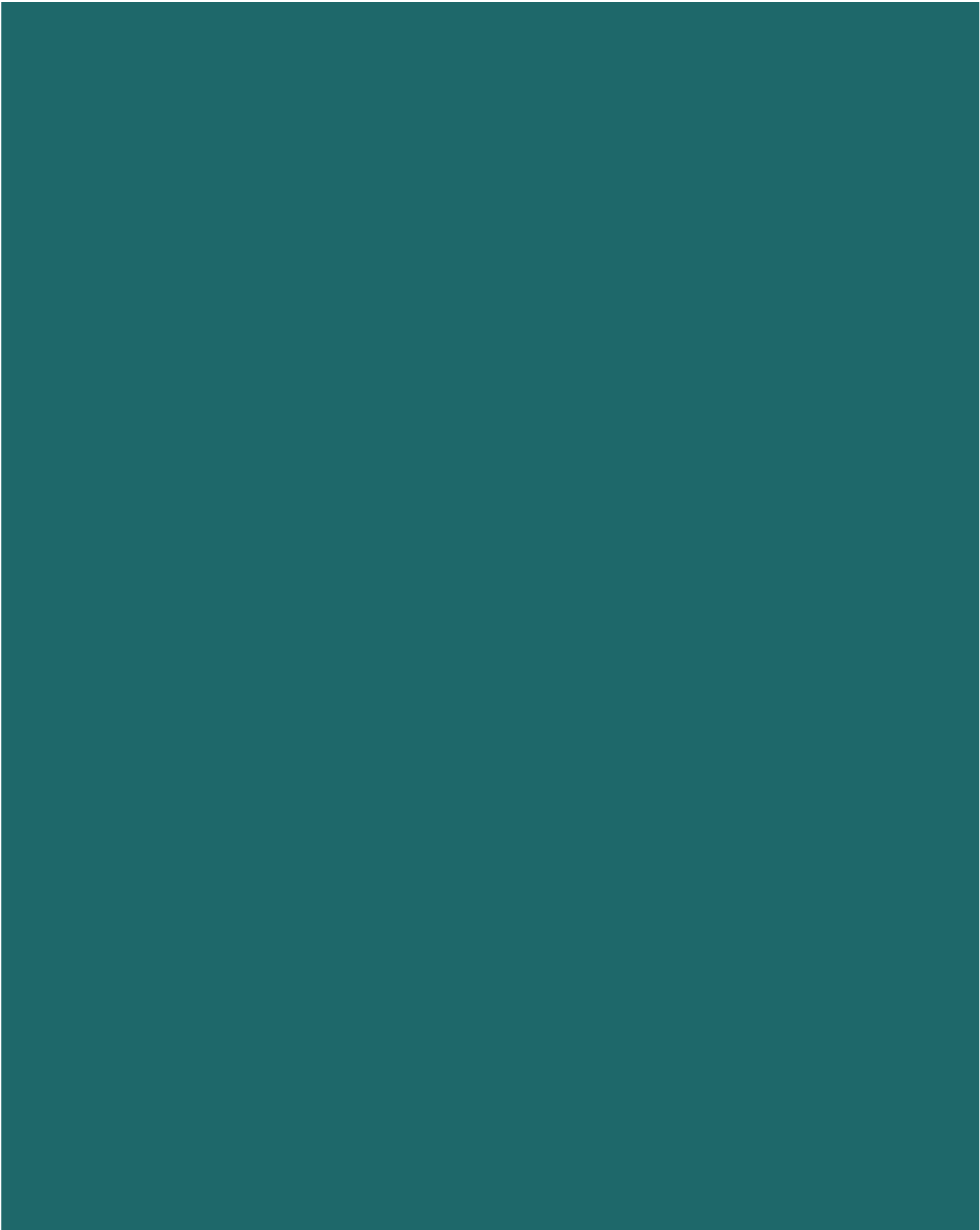
NWRPC

keeping your future as our focus



ANNUAL REPORT 2020





NWRPC COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Ashland County

Richard Pufall
Kathy Schutte
City of Ashland: Deb Lewis

Bayfield County

Dennis Pocernich
James Crandall

Burnett County

Don Taylor
Ed Peterson

Douglas County

Mark Liebaert
Sam Pomush
Ron Leino
City of Superior: Jim Paine

Iron County

Joe Pinardi
Mike Saari

Price County

Robert Kopisch, NWRPC Vice-Chair
Paula Houdek

Rusk County

David Willingham
Randy Tatur, NWRPC Secretary
City of Ladysmith: Calvin Vacho

Sawyer County

Tweed Shuman
Bruce Paulsen

Taylor County

Jim Metz
Rollie Thums
City of Medford: Greg Knight

Washburn County

Tom Mackie, NWRPC Chair
David Masterjohn
City of Spooner: Gary Cuskey

Red Cliff Tribal Council

Richard "Rick" Peterson

Lac du Flambeau Tribal Council

John (Goober) Johnson

Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Council

Louis Taylor

Bad River Tribal Council

Mike Wiggins, Jr.

St. Croix Tribal Council

Susan Lowe

MISSION

AS AN ADVOCATE FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN, NWRPC IS A LEADER, A COORDINATOR, AND AN ADVISOR. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR CORE FUNCTIONS OF PLANNING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

NWRPC STAFF

SHELDON JOHNSON – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR sjohnson@nwrpc.com	JASON LAUMANN – DEPUTY DIRECTOR jlaumann@nwrpc.com
KATE COSTELLO – ACCOUNTING AND LOAN ADMIN SPECIALIST – kcostello@nwrpc.com	KIMBERLY GIFFORD – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST - kgifford@nwrpc.com
ASHTIN GRONNING – ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST agronning@nwrpc.com	ERIC HOWELL – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER ehowell@nwrpc.com
WARREN JOHNSON – ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST wjohnson@nwrpc.com	MARIANN JONES – FISCAL MANAGER mjones@nwrpc.com
MICHAEL KINNICK – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER/CERTIFIED LEAD INSPECTOR mkinnick@nwrpc.com	CLEM LARSON – GIS SPECIALIST clarson@nwrpc.com
EMILY NELSON – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER – enelson@nwrpc.com	KEN PEARSON – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST/ LOAN FUND MANAGER – kpearson@nwrpc.com
CRYSTAL ROHDE – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST/IT SPECIALIST – crohde@nwrpc.com	RICHARD ROESER – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST rroeser@nwrpc.com



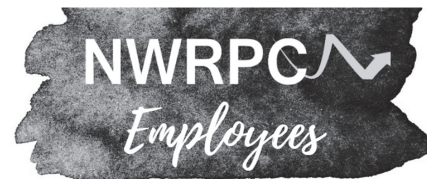
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back at this past year, I can say with certainty that 2020 was unlike any other year at Northwest Regional Planning Commission. With the onset of COVID-19 in early spring, NWRPC pivoted to working remotely for a period of time. Moving from in-person meetings to virtual platforms enabled the regional economic partners to get up-to-date information, keep local work efforts moving and keep our connection to others, all via computer screens. As the world slowed down, NWRPC was continuing to push forward in our work. Our partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration resulted in additional resources provided to NWRPC to assist with pandemic help, which will be highlighted later in the report. With the community and economic impacts of COVID-19 continuing to impact the region, our staff continues to provide assistance and will do so for as long as necessary.

For the past 62 years, NWRPC has been committed to strengthening our partnership with local counties and communities by delivering quality economic and community planning services, and the year 2020 was no different. The community and economic specialists at NWRPC have continued to show their dedication to each and every project. The NWRPC team is committed to excellence, providing quality service, and making the region the best it can be. We are dedicated to helping you and *keeping your future as our focus.*

Sincerely,

Sheldon Johnson
Executive Director



25-29 YEARS

Sheldon Johnson, Mariann Jones

20-24 YEARS

Rick Roeser

15-19 YEARS

Kimberly Gifford, Warren Johnson,
Michael Kinnick, Jason Laumann, Crystal Rohde

5-9 YEARS

Clem Larson

0-4 YEARS

Kate Costello, Ashtin Gronning,
Emily Nelson, Ken Pearson, Eric Howell

PLANNING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) provides technical assistance to member communities to address the growth challenges in a manner that sustains community character and fosters a sense of place. NWRPC has expert staff to respond to the long-range and day-to-day needs of our member communities and provide support services to assist local planning officials and staff. Whether your community is currently developing a comprehensive plan or has general questions about community planning NWRPC can help. NWRPC also assists local governments with transportation planning, hazard mitigation, and community wildfire protection planning, park and recreation planning, historic preservation, tax increment financing and environmental issues like water quality and natural resource planning.

CURRENT LOCAL PLANNING PROJECTS

Red Cliff Hazard Mitigation Plan
St. Croix Hazard Mitigation Plan
Douglas County Hazard Mitigation Plan
Bayfield County Hazard Mitigation Plan
Sawyer County Comprehensive Plan
Town of Bayfield Comprehensive Plan
Douglas County Comprehensive Plan
Town of Draper Comprehensive Plan
Town of Oakland Comprehensive Plan

Red Cliff Comprehensive Plan
Town of Sherman Comprehensive Plan
Town of Meenon Comprehensive Plan
City of Washburn Comprehensive Plan
City of Hayward Comprehensive Plan
Village of Prentice Comprehensive Plan
Ashland County Fluvial Erosion Hazard –
Road Stream Crossing Project
Taylor County Farmland Preservation Plan

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

NWRPC continues to provide regional transportation planning to member communities through its partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Assistance to communities includes roadway evaluation ratings, safe routes to school, corridor planning, grant writing for transportation improvement projects, airport planning, rail planning, and bicycle and pedestrian planning.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

NWRPC and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) continues its longstanding cooperation in supporting metropolitan transportation planning in the Duluth-Superior area. NWRPC was designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Superior Area in 1975, upon which NWRPC and ARDC jointly created the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC). The MIC is assigned the responsibility for carrying out the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3-C) urban transportation planning process for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Area.

Sheldon Johnson serves as the Deputy Director of the MIC and Jason Laumann serves as a member of the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA) PLANNING PROJECT INVESTMENTS

EDA Regional Infrastructure Systems Database project

In April of 2020, NWRPC was awarded a \$201,218 EDA grant for funding to complete a road-stream crossing (RSX) inventory and risk assessment in the Lake Superior counties of northwest Wisconsin. NWRPC staff, working in conjunction with communities and local transportation authorities are conducting an inventory and assessment of road-stream crossings in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Iron Counties. Field measurements and infrastructure characteristics identified through physical observation will be recorded in a master database. Risk assessment criteria will be used to develop a risk rating for each crossing in the survey.



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION



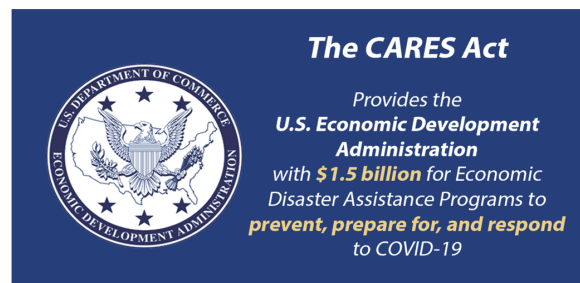
EDA Broadband Survey Project



In June of 2020, NWRPC was awarded a \$120,794 Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for developing and deploying a Regional Broadband Survey Project. The purpose of the surveys is to determine the extent, quality, cost, and usage characteristics of broadband internet in the study region to develop a broadband expansion plan to enhance access to service that is reliable, high-speed, affordable, and capable of supporting and sustaining economic growth.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance

In July of 2020, NWRPC was awarded \$400,000 in EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance to respond to the coronavirus pandemic by enhancing resiliency planning, response and recovery capacity, and technical support and outreach to government, local businesses, the public health community, and other regional stakeholders that have been impacted by coronavirus.



THE POWER OF RESILIENCE PLANNING IS THAT IT FOCUSES BOTH ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE – HOW TO DEAL WITH THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF A DISRUPTIVE EVENT – AS WELL AS HOW TO PREPARE AND ORGANIZE IN ADVANCE AND REBUILD AFTERWARDS WITH A COHERENT FRAMEWORK.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The need for economic stability and growth of the region led to the creation of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) in 1959 by local units of government. Today, NWRPC continues to provide professional services to local units of governments, communities, and businesses to strengthen the regional economy and assist businesses with the retention and creation of high skill/high wage jobs.

Helping Small Businesses in Northwest Wisconsin Grow for over 60 Years

Small Business Loans
Developing Operational Strategies
Teaching Cash Flow Management
Crafting Recovery Planning Procedures
Identifying Resources for Financial Assistance
Creating an Employer Phase-In Model
Drafting Financial Projections
Cultivating Clear Customer Communication & Marketing Messages



NWRPC

ENTERPRISE CENTER NETWORK

The Enterprise Center Network (ECN) is a series of business incubators/accelerators operated by NWRPC that are designed to assist start-up and expanding companies. The ECN provides mixed-use and advanced manufacturing lease space, along with technical and financial assistance, to substantially accelerate their growth. The program is spread throughout the region with locations in Grantsburg, Iron River, Medford, Phillips, Siren, and Spooner.

NWRPC & AFFILIATES REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAMS (RLFs)

Northwest Regional Planning Commission's Revolving Loan Fund Programs are committed to building the economic stability and growth of Northwest Wisconsin. NWRPC has a dedicated history of promoting long-term economic impacts through its access for critical small businesses financing. NWRPC works alongside banks and business owners by providing low-interest, longer-term loans that make good deals better.

IN 2020, NWRPC RECEIVED A \$1.1 MILLION EDA CARES ACT RECOVERY ASSISTANCE GRANT TO PROVIDE LOW-COST FINANCING TO SMALL BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY COVID-19 BY CAPITALIZING AND ADMINISTERING AN RLF TO PROVIDE LOANS TO CORONAVIRUS IMPACTED BUSINESSES IN ASHLAND, BAYFIELD, BURNETT, DOUGLAS, IRON, PRICE, RUSK, SAWYER, TAYLOR, AND WASHBURN COUNTIES.

IMPACT THAT MATTERS

LOCAL COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

\$306.4 million dollars



Private Funding **\$186,381,513**

Public Funding **\$61,153,016**

Owner's Equity **\$58,877,117**

DIRECT JOBS CREATED/RETAINED



69,969

BUSINESSES ASSISTED

580

AVERAGE LOAN SIZE

\$350,988



BUSINESS CATEGORIES



COMMERCIAL – 31%



INDUSTRIAL – 40%



SERVICE – 24%



FAÇADE – 2%



OTHER – 3%

RLF LOANED OUT **\$37,733,463**

LOANS REPAID **\$23,662,188**

NWRPC & AFFILIATE RLFs since 1983

"I knew taking over a business was an undertaking in itself; however, trying to coordinate the financial layers was a feat of its own right. I'm glad NWRPC was there from start to finish, walking us all through the process," Justin Lawrence, Wolverine Tire – Washburn County

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In 1973, the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce designated NWRPC as an Economic Development District (EDD). As a result, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is prepared to guide the economic growth of the district. This year, NWRPC prepared the 2020-2024 CEDS five-year plan. The document provides an analysis of local conditions; identifies the problems, needs, and opportunities of the district; defines the vision, goals, and objectives of the district; and designates and coordinates strategies and/or activities to accomplish and implement its goals. The strategy also includes a regional project list developed through local stakeholder input. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission adopted the 2020-2024 Northwest WI Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy on October 28th, 2020 at the NWRPC Executive Committee meeting. The CEDS can be found online at www.nwrpc.com/CEDS.

HOUSING

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) administers a number of housing rehabilitation and down payment/closing cost assistance programs. Our housing programs benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) households needing to make home improvements or wishing to purchase a home.

Rehabilitation Projects

Assistance is available in the form of a zero percent, deferred-payment loan to make necessary repairs to an owner-occupied home. Landlords may also use housing rehabilitation assistance to make repairs to rental units using zero percent interest loans amortized for up to 10 years.

Roofing

Heating

Insulation

Windows & Doors

Handicap Access

Siding

Electrical

Foundation

Sewer & Water Laterals

Well & Septic

Homebuyer Assistance

Assistance is available in the form of a zero percent, deferred-payment loan to provide a portion of the 50% of the down payment not to exceed 10% of the purchase price to renters to purchase their own home.



Under the Community Development Block Grant 18-01 contract a total of \$282,487 of regional revolving loan funds (RLFs) were spent in addition to \$1,404,186 for housing rehabilitation and down payment assistance. The 18-01 contract ended December 31, 2020. The administration team is now obligating funds from the CDBG 20-01 contract with a timeframe of July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022. Rehabilitation funds under this new contract award from the Wisconsin Department of Administration total \$1,709,402. To date \$550,094 of the funds have been obligated along with \$4,221 of regional RLF monies.

HOUSING REHABILITATION FUNDS IN ACTION



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Recycling Control Commission

The Recycling Control Commission (RCC) is a two-county intergovernmental unit which was created in 1991 to provide recycling and waste management services. The programs serve the residents of Washburn and Burnett counties and provides drop-off recycling of state required materials at sites located throughout the two counties.



Douglas County Recycling

NWRPC also manages the recycling program for rural Douglas County. The program develops and implements recycling efforts for rural residents by providing drop-off and curbside recycling sites throughout the county.

Northwest Cleansweep

The Northwest Cleansweep Program has created an awareness of the dangers posed by hazardous wastes and unused hazardous materials among our constituent population. In addition to educating the public on pollution prevention and waste reduction techniques, Northwest Cleansweep provides a collection outlet for hazardous wastes that continue to be generated throughout our region and households, very small quantity generators (VSQGs), schools, municipalities, and farms have relied on the program continuing to be available. The annual collection events will occur again this Summer and are a cooperative venture supported by: Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn Counties; Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and Northwest Regional Planning Commission. If you are a property owner in one of the 9-counties in the Northwest Cleansweep service region, you are eligible to use any of the collection events. Watch our website for more information, soon.

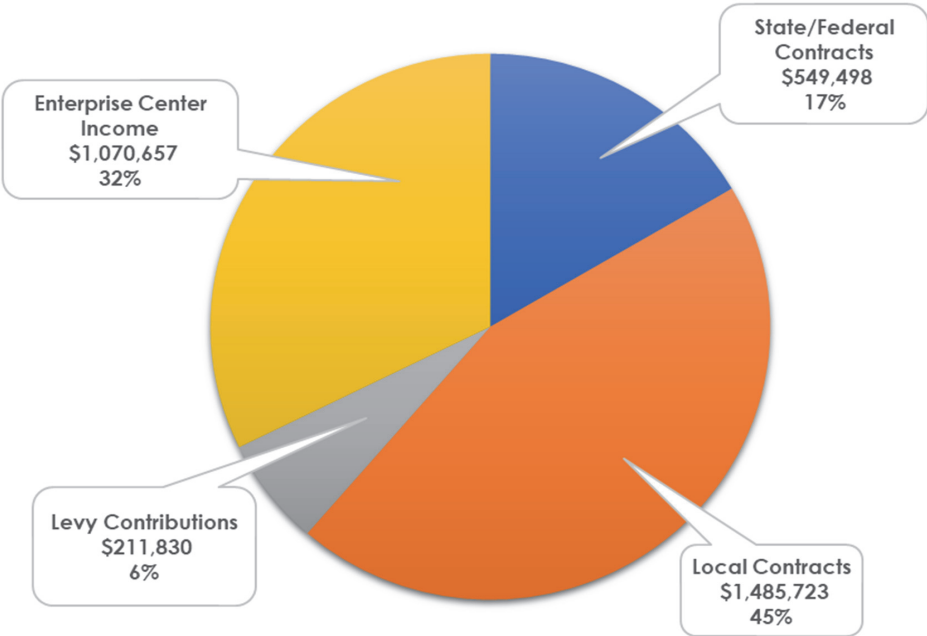


Protect the Northwoods

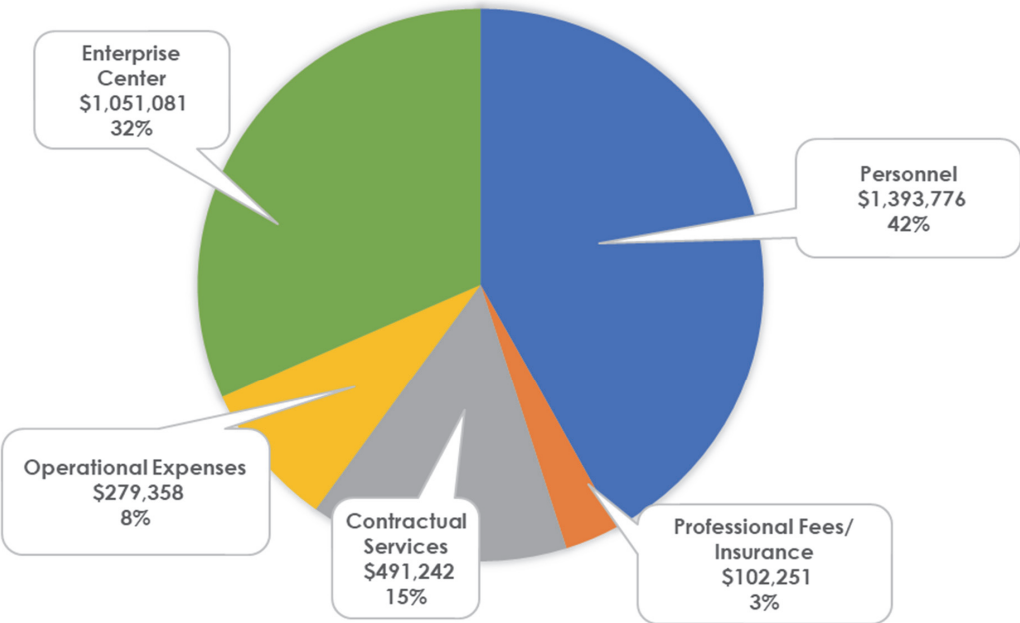
**In 2020, the Northwest
Cleansweep Program
collected 134,446 pounds
across county events and
VSQG (Very Small Quantity
Generators – businesses).
Medications collected at five
events totaled 385 pounds
(356.5 pounds non-controlled
and 26.5 pounds controlled).**

2020 NWRPC FINANCIALS*

2020 REVENUES



2020 EXPENSES

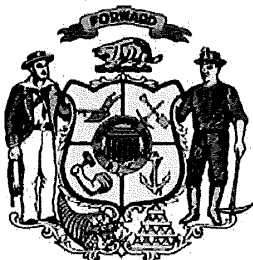


*Unaudited Financials

MANY THANKS TO OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS

Counties - Local Units of Government - Tribal Governments –
Federal and State Legislators – Northwest WI Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) -
Comprehensive Employment Program (CEP) – Small Business Development
Corporation (SBDC) - Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) –
North Central Wisconsin Technical College (NCWTC) – UW-Superior – Lac Courte
Oreilles College - University of Wisconsin Extension – Metropolitan Interstate Council –
Harbor Technical Advisory Committee – Wisconsin Economic Development
Corporation (WEDC) – Federal Agencies: EDA, NOAA, HUD, EPA, USDA, FEMA
State Agencies: DNR, DOT, DWD, DATCP, DPI, Tourism, WEM, WHEDA –
International Trade, Business & Economic Development Council (ITBEC) –
Wood Industry Collaborative - Local Banks and Financial Institutions –
Regional EDOs - Local Economic Development Groups

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
1400 South River Street
Spooner, WI 54801
715-635-2197 | info@nwrpc.com
www.nwrpc.com



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON FORESTRY

Tony Evers, Governor

councilonforestry.wi.gov

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March 16, 2021

Tom Hittle
Chairman

Matt Dallman
Vice-Chair

Heather Berklund

Sen. Janet Bewley

Michael Bolton

James Hoppe

Buddy Huffaker

James Kerkman

Dr. William Van Lopik

Rebekah Luedtke

Rep. Beth Meyers

Rep. Jeffrey Mursau

Ken Price

Dr. Adena Rissman

Henry Schienebeck

Jason Sjostrom

Jordan Skiff

Paul Strong

The Future of Wisconsin's Forest Products Economy Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) Visioning Document

Background:

The forest products industry in Wisconsin provides more than 63,000 full- and part-time jobs and has a total industry output of \$24.4 billion and value-added of \$6.7 billion. It ranks 11th in terms of number of full-and part-time jobs, 9th in value-added, and 3rd in industry output in the state. Every ten jobs in the forest products industry support additional fifteen jobs in other sectors in the state.

The forest products industry:

- is the number one employer in seven counties.
- is one of the top ten employers in 29 counties.
- is the number one industry for value-added in seven counties.
- is one of the top ten industries for industry output in 37 counties.

Forest based recreationists annually spend an estimated \$2 billion within Wisconsin communities. This spending stimulates the economy further and it is estimated that forest-based recreation is a \$5.5 billion dollar industry.

Wisconsin's forest industry plays a critical role in supporting the sustainable management of the state's 17 million acres of forest land that covers 41 percent of the state's total area. Healthy and vigorous forests provide essential wildlife habitat, help to ensure clean water and air, and are critical to addressing climate change.

While the state's industry historically has been durable and diversified, mounting challenges have put this continued hardiness and all of the benefits at risk. The Verso Corporation announced in June 2020 that it would shut down mills in Wisconsin Rapids and Duluth Minnesota, laying off about 900 workers in Wisconsin Rapids and 100 in the Duluth-Superior area. The "Rapids" mill is more than a century old and has been a fixture of not only the Wisconsin Rapids area, but of the state's entire pulp and paper industry, purchasing an estimate 25 percent of wood sold by landowners in Wisconsin.

Solid wood sawmills also face challenges from alternative products, and global economic and political challenges and diminished overseas markets. Stresses on the paper and sawmill industries were exacerbated this past year with the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the forest industry strive to continue operating and thriving despite these challenges, and some are looking toward the future for new market opportunities. Efforts to transition toward a modern, sustainable bioeconomy that supports growth while protecting long-term forest health are underway in a cooperative working group formed by the States of Michigan and Maine, and Finland. Advancements in bioeconomy and clean technologies have the possibility of supplementing and advancing traditional forest products industries.

Wisconsin has a strong forestry community dedicated to supporting the industry and the sound and sustainable management of our forest resources. Numerous groups, associations, agencies, and organizations have worked cooperatively together for years to support and advance Wisconsin forestry. This community is well poised to continue these efforts.

REDS Process Goal:

This cross-sector collaboration will engage stakeholders across Wisconsin's forest products economy to identify priorities that will help the state better understand and capitalize on enhancing existing timber industries and establishing new market opportunities for Wisconsin's forest products.

REDS Background:

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) oversees the Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) process, which helps local and regional stakeholders leverage federal programs to advance locally-identified economic development priorities. The REDS process aims to catalyze project implementation, utilizing regional partners' Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS). A state or region must have established clear priorities before planning a REDS event.

Leadership:

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry (CoF), at the request of Governor Evers, will lead this initiative, with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) providing administrative, planning, and technical support. The Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) with forestry activities in their regions will be integral to this effort, as their CEDS will help to identify priorities.

A strategic planning team will help drive day-to-day progress and liaise with the EDA and the larger stakeholder group. This team includes:

- Council on Forestry: Tom Hittle - Chair, Matt Dallman- Vice Chair
- DNR: James Yach – N. WI Director, Heather Berklund – State Forester, Dr. Ram Dahal – Forest Economist, Logan Wells – Forest Products Specialist
- WEDC: Sam Ridders – Deputy Secretary, Rachel Best – Director of Events, Kietra Olson – Rural Initiatives Manager
- RPCs: Crystal Rohde – Business Development Specialist (NWRPC) & Visions Northwest Regional Economic Development Administrator, Kevin Englebert – Assistant Director (ECWRPC), Sydney Swan – Economic Development Planner (BLRPC)
- University of WI: Dr. Paul Fowler, Wisconsin Institute for Sustainable Technology, UWSP
- Senator Baldwin's Office: Brian Conlan – Sr. Economic Policy Advisor

Stakeholder Engagement:

It is a priority to engage and seek input from a cross-sector group of forestry stakeholders from industry, community, education, government, landowners, environmental, and non-profits. The Council on Forestry's membership provides a starting place for engaging a diverse group of stakeholders, but casting a wider net will ensure the full diversity of Wisconsin's forest products economy is engaged.

Existing Resources:

This initiative will incorporate and build off existing resources, including, but not limited to:

- Wisconsin's Statewide Forestry Action Plan (2020)
- Wisconsin Forest Practice Study
- County Forest 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plans
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies created by the RPCs
- DNR's Economic Contribution of Forest Products Industry to Wisconsin Economy (2020); and
- FOR/Maine Vision and Roadmap for Maine's Forest Products Sector (2018).

Expected Outcomes:

Outcomes for this overall process are envisioned to include:

- Generally, a cohesion of all stakeholder interests and efforts towards supporting the Wisconsin forest industry and sustainable management of the state's forest resources.
- The identification of existing resources that can inform future efforts, decisions, and policies to guide the strengthening of the state's forest industry.
- The identification of gaps in knowledge, resources or other areas that are impacting or could inhibit efforts toward strengthening the state's forest industry.
- Following initial stakeholder input and investigations, develop a blueprint for a process to identify targetable initiatives or identify existing priority initiatives sufficient to begin the REDS process.
- Launch a REDS in order to explore Federal and other resources that would support moving priority initiatives forward.

Timeline:

- December 2020: An initial meeting was held between the CoF, DNR, WEDC, RPCs, EDA, Senator Baldwin's Office, and Maine Development Foundation.
- February 2021: Strategic Planning Team convenes.
- May 6th and May 11th: Public listening sessions.
- May 3rd through May 13th : Stakeholder listening sessions.
- Summer 2021: Listening session comments distilled and summarized. Council on Forestry recommends initiatives for the REDS.
- Fall 2021: REDS held.

Contact:

Tom Hittle, WI Council on Forestry Chair
tom.hittle@steigerwaldt.com



**Sawyer County / Lac Courte Oreilles
Economic Development Corporation**

March 2021 Activity Report

Recovery Assistance

- USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers unveiled. Intended to reach a broader set of producers than previous aid. Significance to Sawyer County is in the inclusion of timber harvesting and hauling, dairy farmers, specialty crops, organic certification, and conservation activities.
- Small Business Administration updates: This information is changing rapidly and is based on current understanding of the programs.
 - Paycheck Protection Program: PPP Extension Act of 2021 passed by Congress once signed by President Biden will extend the time for lenders to submit PPP loan applications to the SBA from March 31, 2021 through May 31, 2021. It will also allow the SBA to process these applications through June 30, 2021.
 - Shuttered Venue Operators Grant: Applications open April 8, 2021. The American Rescue Plan Act amended the program so entities that apply for a PPP loan after Dec. 27, 2021 can also apply for SVOG. The eligible entity's grant to be reduced by the PPP loan amount.
 - Economic Injury Disaster Loans: American Rescue Plan allocated another \$15 billion in EIDL advances (grants). Businesses who have not previously applied may do so but will not be considered for an EIDL advance (grant) at this time.
 - Community Navigators Initiative announced. SBA will enlist trusted, culturally knowledgeable partners who conduct targeted outreach to specific sectors of the entrepreneurial community. The initial pilot will target Native American and women-owned small businesses. EDC is monitoring closely to identify partnerships and support for our efforts.
 - Distributed two email messages with SBA program updates and webinar links to the EDC business contact list. Resulted in a 38% open rate with further distribution provided by the Hayward Area Chamber of Commerce and coverage in the Sawyer County Record.
- Wisconsin: Department of Revenue and the Stop the COVID Spread Coalition are launching a pilot community-based approach to figuring out how to economically recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. They will use an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process in the communities of Wausau, Green Bay and Rhinelander over the next few months. AI is a strengths-based improvement methodology utilizing a SOAR process where participants identify Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results.

Business Retention and Expansion

- Sawyer County Forest Products Economy: The Wisconsin Council of Forestry to initiate a Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the Department of Natural Resources providing administrative, planning, and technical support. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission will be integral as their existing 2020-2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) will help identify priorities. Stakeholder listening sessions are scheduled for May 3 through May 13, Public listening sessions May 6 and 11, 2021. The U.S. Economic Development Administration oversees the REDS process and assists local and regional stakeholders leverage federal programs to advance locally identified economic development opportunities.
 - Met with Forest Economist, Logan Wells, WDNR Forest Products Specialist, Hayward.
 - Met with Matt Dallman, Vice-Chair Wisconsin Council on Forestry
 - Met with Eric Maki, President, Midwest Forest Products Company, Hayward
 - EDC will be participating and monitoring opportunities and partnerships.
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation: Met with David Wierzba newly appointed Regional Economic Development Director located in Weyerhaeuser. Contact information: David.wierzba@wedc.org, 608-210-6824.

Broadband Expansion

- Broadband Committee: Co Chairs Bruce Paulson and Leo Carlson have reinvigorated efforts to identify applicable service providers to collaborate on expansion to underserved areas of the County and Reservation. Recent Federal legislation including the Emergency Broadband Benefit, Broadband provisions of the American Rescue Plan and the Affordable Internet for All Act are being monitored.
- StarLink: a satellite internet constellation constructed by SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corp.) is targeting coverage to a limited number of users in our service area. Several residents have installed or ordered the service. EDC will be monitoring cost / benefit experiences.

Fundraising and Sustainability

- Annual Fundraising Campaign: The Fundraising Committee met twice in support of the launch of contacts to area institutions and businesses for annual and renewed support of EDC mission and priorities. Early response has been very favorable.
- System for Award Management (SAM): registered EDC with the official Federal payment tracking database to be approved to receive funding from future grant applications.

Contact: Mike Gardner Executive Director mgardner@northflow.net 715-462-4775

Part I Section C, 3. Economic Development and UW Extension and Agriculture Committee

Mission/Purpose: Provide the leadership for implementation of the Education and Economic Development for Sawyer County. To provide leadership in monitoring outcomes, reviewing, and recommending to the County Board all policies related to educational and economic development initiatives of Sawyer County.

Statutory responsibilities: 59.56(3) Wis. Stats.

Membership: Shall be comprised of five (5) elected County Board supervisors appointed by the Chair of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors at the April meeting of the County Board in even numbered years.

Term: Members shall serve for a two-year term concurrent with their terms of office as County Board Supervisors.

Reporting Relationship: The Economic Development and Extension Committee shall have responsibility for outcome monitoring and oversight of the performance of economic development initiatives supported by Sawyer County. The Committee shall have the primary responsibility of conferring with and acting as liaison for the following County agencies:

- Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- County Visitor and Convention Bureau
- Snowmobile Trails Association
- UW Extension
- Sawyer County Fair Association
- SC/LCO Economic Development Corporation

Duties and responsibilities of the Economic Development and Extension Committee include but are not limited to:

1. Foster the implementation of the County's initiatives related to economic development.
2. Identify the need for and recommend to the County Board, policies related to education and economic development initiatives appropriately supported by Sawyer County.
3. Review new programs and associated budget requirements prior to their being considered for inclusion in the County's budget.
4. Facilitate broad based discussion of issues and policies encouraging public involvement.
5. Serve as the initial contact point for individuals and/or organizations who wish to influence County Board policy regarding County economic development.
6. Delegate operational procedures and practices to appropriate administrative committee(s) and department(s) of the County.

7. Review and recommend to the County Board programmatic and facility plans consistent with the community's expectations for the University of Wisconsin-Extension.
8. Serve as the County's Extension and Education Committee by performing the following responsibilities:
 - Establish UW/ Sawyer County based extension policy; and
 - Provide budget oversight of UW/Sawyer County based extension department; and
 - Provide input and monitor the performance of the UW Extension programming; and
 - Create policies and strategies that accomplish educational needs in an efficient and cost-effective manner; and
 - Provide a leadership role with the County Board and other community partners to preserve and enhance access to the resources of the public university; and
 - Assess future community educational needs; and
 - Facilitate a partnership between the County and the University of Wisconsin.
9. Additional duties as assigned by the County Board.