

River Country Resource
Conservation & Development
Council's mission is to initiate,
facilitate and build connections for
the wise use of natural, human and
economic resources.



Every Day is Earth Day

Did you ever wonder what would happen if we all forgot our connection to the earth? Everything we do affects the earth and environment around us.

Take for example, planning to cook a meal for tonight's dinner. As you look through your cookbook, you flip the pages that were made from trees. You decide what to make, but you do not have all the ingredients. So, you contemplate jumping into your car to head to the grocery store.

The gasoline you would use could negatively effect the environment, which is getting more and more expensive. You may decide to delay your drive by waiting to combine it with other necessary errands, or you may decide to ride your bicycle to the grocery store to retrieve those few ingredients you need for tonight's meal.

The grocery store has many varieties of the same types of food to choose from. You decide to purchase local products because you know that non-local food normally travels 1,500 miles before it gets to your door. You can positively affect the excessive use of fuel by purchasing those local foods. Not to mention it helps out your local economy.

Finally, you head back home. There you decide to wash the vegetables to ensure healthy food for your family. Now your ready to make the most delicious meal.

After the meal, you need to wash your dishes. Do you want to use the soap that might run through the sewer system down into the rivers near by? But you chose to purchase an environmentally friendly soap that is not only good for your family, but also good for the nearby rivers and streams. The best part is that the soap is sold in a renewable glass bottle.

In this short story, you would have encountered many more decisions that will effect your natural environment. Earth Day was celebrated in late April. We at River Country RC&D believe that every day is earth day and we all can be a positive influence.

Take a second to walk outside. Listen to the birds, smell the fresh air and smile at the fact that you live in West Central Wisconsin and you have a beautiful natural environment to enjoy.



Benefit for Wayne Brunner
June 17, 2006
Time: 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
Wayne Brunner Residence,
Arkansaw, WI
See: Page 3 for more details

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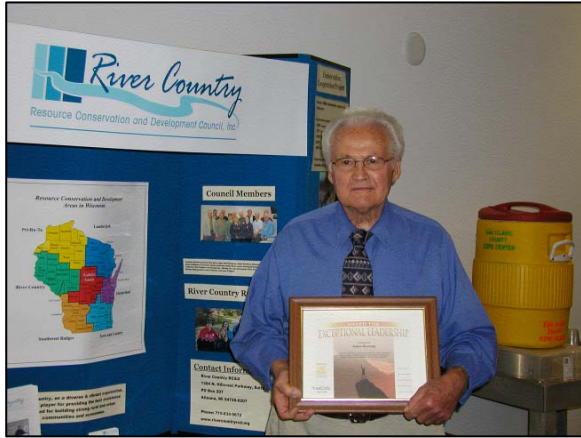
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Season of Changes

Thank You President Hartung!



James Hartung is the man of the hour. For over 20 years he has been active with River Country Resource Conservation and Development. He was selected in 1984 to represent Dunn County Board of Supervisors to River Country RC&D. At that time, he asked the County Chairman, "What is River Country RC&D?" The Chairman responded with, "I don't know, but you're going to find out." Twenty-two years later, Mr. Hartung has stepped down from this calling.

Jim worked hard to bring the council, once an advisory group, to the influential non-profit organization it is today. He led the organization through smooth and challenging times. All with a strong desire to positively help the communities in the twelve county area. He has been a president with three RC&D Coordinators and one Executive Director.

One of his famous sayings is that "RC&D is more than just Rolls, Coffee, and Donuts; it is Resource, Conservation and Development." He lives by the mission to promote wise use of natural, human and economic resources. He will continue

to live by the mission as he continues with the next adventures in life.

The River Country RC&D Council and Staff **THANKS HIM** for all that he did for the organization for the last 20 plus years. We will always look to him as a man of strong leadership who has a true gift to motivate others.

New Board of Directors Elected

On May 24, 2006, The Annual meeting of the River Country Resource Conservation and Development Council was held. Elections for Board of Directors took place at this meeting. The following people were elected to the respective positions: President Edward Weber, Vice-President Rich Purdy, Secretary Dave Bautch, Treasurer Dale Fern, Directors Larry Balk, Marilyn Mayenschein, and Roger Kaufman. We welcome these new officers and look to them as the guiding arm of the organization.

Summer Interns

Joining our team includes Heidi Zajack and Derek Waldera.

- Heidi Zajack is a biotechnology major at UW-Stout in Menomonie. She originally comes from Thorp, Wisconsin. Her summer activities will revolve around the Prairie Partnership Project. She will be mapping the plant and animal species throughout Xcel Energy's property along Eau Claire's North Crossing.
- Derek Waldera is an animal science major from UW-River Falls. He originally comes from Whitehall, Wisconsin. This summer he will be working on collecting data for a grazing nutrition study in the coulee region, as well as getting experience working on conservation programs with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Special thanks goes to the following donors:

Gene and Donna Ruetz
Natural Resources Conservation Service
City of Independence
Xcel Energy
Shooting Star Native Seeds

Wisconsin Milk Mktg. Board
Grassworks, Inc.
Prairie Enthusiasts
WI Department of Agriculture
Dario Hartman

And all our many volunteers!!!

Calendar of Events

June 6, 2006

Coulee Pasture Walk – Wright Farm
Holmen, WI

June 18-22

National RC&D Conference
Savannah, GA

June 20, 2006

Coulee Pasture Walk – Olson Farm
Strum, WI

June 21, 2006

Chippewa Pasture Walk – McGuire
Farm, Greenwood, WI

July 5, 2006

River Country Board Meeting

July 6, 2006

Coulee Pasture Walk – Kling Farm
Taylor, WI

July 14, 2006

Chippewa and Coulee Pasture Walk
together – Waldera Farm
Whitehall, WI

July 19, 2006

Chippewa Pasture Walk – Iverson
Farm, Bloomer, WI

August 1, 2006

Coulee Pasture Walk – Litscher
Farm, Fountain City, WI

BENEFIT: Wayne Brunner

Saturday, June 17, 2006



River Country RC&D aims to assist farmers in the River Country area by providing education and technical assistance on a number of issues. Wayne Brunner has been one of those farmers. He has attended the Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference a few times to learn more about value added agriculture and direct marketing. It was knowledge learned at the conference that helped him shape his farming operation. This is why River Country would like you to know about a benefit being held in his honor.

Wayne Brunner, 50, of Arkansaw fell 30 feet from the top of the Slurry store (manure containment system) on May 5, 2006. Wayne's injuries include a broken back, shattered right leg (at the knee joint) and a severely dislocated right elbow. He has had surgery on the right leg to rebuild as much as possible, and will wear a turtle shell brace on his back for the next few months. He relies on a wheelchair to get around.

The farm chores are being taken care of by Wayne's family and the fieldwork with the help of friends and neighbors. The Brunner's had no medical insurance, but have been accepted for medical aid to help with the medical bills.

Funding is needed to help the Brunner's keep the farm going during the next year while Wayne is disabled. Much of the fieldwork will have to be hired and there are many repairs that cannot be afforded at this time.

Calendar of Events con't

August 3, 2006
River Country Full Council Meeting

August 14, 2006
Chippewa Pasture Walk – Schuster Farm, Fall Creek, WI

August 15, 2006
Coulee Pasture Walk – Kaufman Farm, Black River Falls, WI

September 5, 2006
Coulee Pasture Walk – Dejong Farm, Alma Center, WI

September 10, 2006
Locally Grown and Made Marketplace
Eau Claire Expo Center

September 12, 2006
Chippewa Valley Environmental Experience – Beaver Creek Reserve
Fall Creek, WI

September 13, 2006
Chippewa Pasture Walk – Flodquist Farm, Colfax, WI

September 21, 2006
Coulee Pasture Walk – Haas Farm
Taylor, WI

Location: Wayne and Janet Brunner's (Midvallyvu Farms), W8481 County Rd Z Arkansaw, WI

Date: Saturday, June 17 2006

Time: 11AM – 4PM

Lunch: Buffalo Burgers, Brats, Beans, Salads, Chips, Milk and Ice Cream

Silent Auction and Cash Donations

Speaker: Annette Fischer (Helping people to make healthy choices.)

Questions or to make donations please call: Randy Anderson (715) 285-5226

Driftless Area Initiative Gains Partners

On April 19th, 2006, many organizations, units of government, and representatives gathered in LaCrosse to kick off the memorandum of understanding for organizations such as RC&D and Pheasants Forever, plus four states to work together to help improve the streams in the driftless area.

Bruce Knight from the Natural Resources Conservation Service flew in from Washington DC to pledge his support. Also in attendance was Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton of Wisconsin and Ron Kind, Federal Congressman.

The group was not only celebrating the beginning of a partnership, and also the \$260,000 granted to the RC&D for work in 2006.

River Country currently has a part time employee in Pierce County providing education and technical assistance to landowners who are implementing conservation practices along the Rush and Isabelle creeks.

Pasture Walks Abound

The pasture walk schedules have been released. River Country RC&D is working to provide wonderful opportunities to learn about grass management, to network with other farmers, and to enjoy the natural surroundings. They are open to the public.

An exciting addition to the traditional pasture walk is a pasture walk with a New Zealander. John Roche from Hamilton, New Zealand will be at the July 14th pasture walk. He has expertise in agricultural science and nutrition.

Take a second to see if you can make it to any of them. The list is in the calendar of events. Directions can be obtained by calling the River Country grazing staff.

Realizing Dreams With Holistic Management

Wondering whether to change jobs? Why your land can't produce a decent crop? How to save your city's water supply?

Holistic Management can steer you to the answers. It requires no elaborate technology or specialized knowledge, but rather a new decision-making process that gives us the ability to design and to plan the future we want while ensuring that the environment can sustain it.

The new decision-making process can serve to manage a farm, a national park, or a city's water supply, or one's personal life, a household, a corporation, or organization of any kind. It also can be used to diagnose the underlying cause of many problems, to assess a variety of policies, and to make research more relevant to management needs.

In brief, you begin by defining the entity being managed in terms of the people responsible for its management and the resources available to them. These people then form what we refer to as a **holistic goal** that describes the quality of life they collectively seek, what they have to produce to create that quality of life, and a description of the resource base they depend upon **as it will have to be**, far into the future, to sustain what they must produce to create the quality of life they envision.

Making Decisions Based on Seven Simple Questions

All the decisions they make in planning how to reach the holistic goal, or in addressing problems or opportunities that arise along the way, are evaluated according to the same criteria they have always used. In addition, however, they finally ask seven simple questions to ensure their decisions are socially, environmentally and economically sound **and will lead them toward the holistic goal**. In other words, any action taken to deal with a problem, to reach an objective, or to meet a basic need, should accomplish what is required, but should also enhance progress toward the holistic goal. To ensure that this happens, a feedback loop is established so that if monitoring shows the decision is not taking you where you want to go, you can act immediately to correct it.

This might seem a lot with which to concern yourself just to make a decision, and it is. However, once the idea is grasped, and as people become increasingly committed to the achievement of their holistic goal, making decisions this way is no more time consuming than before. In fact, the process often enables you to reach a decision more quickly, particularly when the decision is a difficult one.

Those working in leading-edge corporations today will find much in this process that is familiar to them. The quality of life portion of the holistic goal is similar to corporate mission statements when those statements genuinely reflect shared values. The next two parts of the holistic goal are just as critical, and are a new development. Feedback loops are also used routinely in many quality-conscious corporations, and have been written about extensively. One or two of the seven questions might also be familiar and, in some cases, routinely used in corporate decision-making.

There will be much that is genuinely new, however, largely because these ideas originated in a drive to restore deteriorating environments, rather than to enhance the corporate bottom line. We soon found, of course, that it was impossible to make any real progress on the land unless we consistently examined the financial and social consequences of any decision, just as corporations increasingly find that black ink turns red when they don't consider the environmental and social consequences of their decisions.

Reconnect to the Land With Holistic Management

If you are one of many who feel disconnected from the land, our hope is that through Holistic Management you will re-establish that connection. We can guarantee that you will never view the land the same way again. Most of our experience thus far has been gained in working with people living on the land and attempting to make their living from it. Much of what they struggle with in attempting to do that, is what people everywhere struggle with in making a living or a life together. In that sense, Holistic Management speaks to everyone.

Those who are looking for **the** way to solve the ever escalating problems we face, won't find it in Holistic Management. There is no one way, and no one answer, to any problem, and never can be. There are millions of answers and potential solutions, and these have to be worked out case by case, situation by situation, by people who are driven by a desire for something better. Holistic Management merely empowers people to identify and achieve what is best **for them**.

For more information, contact Heather Flashinski, Certified Educator in Holistic Management, at 715-834-9672

Partnership for a Prairie

Several remnant prairies located on land owned by Xcel Energy near Northstar Middle school and North High school

have been used informally by the teachers as educational tools for their classrooms. A group of volunteers from UW Stout, UW Extension, Beaver Creek Reserve, Xcel Energy and the Prairie Enthusiasts as well as River Country RC&D are working to develop a plan to

enhance some of these parcels near the school, and to develop a more formal "outdoor classroom". The partnership is also drafting a long term management plan for the prairie that will help ensure that the community will be able to enjoy the prairie for years to come. This

summer River Country RC&D staff will be collecting background data to use in the management plan, as well as starting some brush removal and invasive species control. If you are interested in helping out in any way, please feel free to contact Brian Brezinski, Melanie Oetzman or Heidi Zajack at 715-834-9672.

Prairie Seed Sale Aids Conservation Effort

Much of Wisconsin's pre-settlement vegetation has been altered by agricultural production. Prairies were among the community types most readily lost as Wisconsin became settled because the soil was very fertile, and was easily converted to agricultural land. Today, we understand the value of prairies and the need to protect the remaining remnant prairies, as well as restore prairie habitat.

There is much to be gained through prairie restorations. Prairie vegetation creates habitat for a variety of wildlife, including rare species. In addition to habitat, prairies provide open space for water infiltration, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic beauty to the landscape. One of the ways that River Country RC&D is involved in prairie restoration and protection is through the annual bulk prairie seed sale.

Each year, River Country Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, Inc. offers landowners throughout Wisconsin a chance to order high quality prairie seed at a much lower cost. River Country receives seed orders from landowners, solicits bids from local nurseries, orders seed, and weighs out each individual order. This is done for a minimal cost to the landowners who receive seed purchased based on the best prices and highest quality seed available.

River Country RC&D's bulk prairie seed sale for 2006 was a success. We received

42 orders from landowners all over the state of Wisconsin, with over 480 acres of prairie habitat planted. Many of the landowners are participating in a government program that provides cost sharing to establish native grasses on agricultural land, but landowners are also establishing prairies on their own. One landowner, Gayle Kleppe, who also volunteered to help weigh and sort seed, has been restoring her property for the last 10-12 years. Every year she and her husband would manually harvest prairie seed from remnants and then propagate them in a greenhouse before planting. She turned to River Country to help supply seed that is hard to hand collect or was not growing on her property.

If anyone is interested in buying seed this year, we do have seed available. There are small amounts of many different varieties left over and still for sale. For a complete list of available seed, please contact Melanie Oetzman at 715-834-9672 or Melanie.oetzman@rcdnet.net

2007 Value Added Conference In Red Wing

The 2007 Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference will be held in Red Wing, Minnesota. This move will allow more people to attend. By moving the conference throughout the Midwest there will be more opportunity for others to learn about Value Added Agriculture.

It will be held January 26-27, 2007. Mark your calendars. We look forward to seeing everyone there.



Will you make a significant investment in our community by making a gift to the River Country RC&D Giving Circle?

- _____ River and Country Society (\$5000 or more)
- _____ Diamond Circle (\$2500 - \$4999)
- _____ Platinum Circle (\$1500-\$2499)
- _____ Gold Circle (\$1000-\$1499)

- _____ Silver Circle (\$500-\$999)
- _____ Bronze Circle (\$150-\$499)
- _____ Associate Circle (\$35-\$149)

_____ For three years, I pledge the above amount.

Total Gift: _____

My Gift will be Paid by:

_____ Payment Enclosed (check # _____)
 _____ Direct Billing _____ Once (date) _____ or _____ Quarterly
 _____ Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ I/We wish to remain anonymous.

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Photo by Lesley Zuehls