

History and humans have been unkind to wetlands. Not too long ago we considered wetlands wastelands -- areas that were best suited to be drained, filled, or used as garbage dumps.

These activities resulted in the loss of about half the historic wetlands in Wisconsin.

Today we understand the crucial role that wetlands play in maintaining the health of our waters. We also know that there is value in restoring natural wetland services.

Wetlands provide:

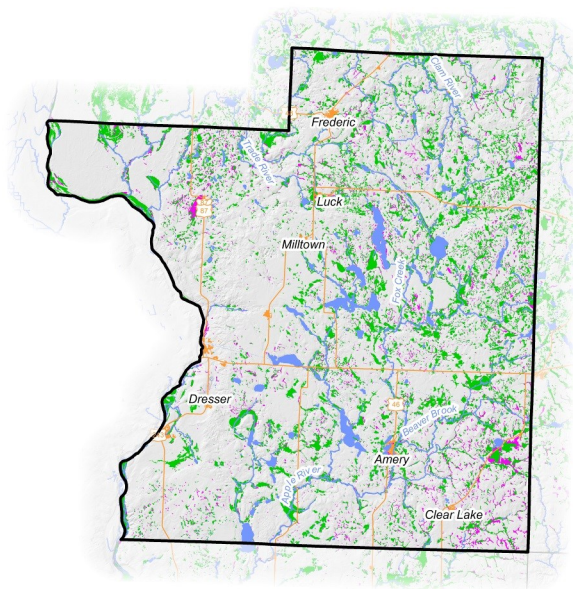
- Clean water
- Flood protection
- Fish & wildlife habitat
- Shoreland stabilization
- And more....

This fact sheet provides information about the extent of current and potentially restorable wetlands in your county. We hope this information helps you explore ways to put wetlands to work for your community.



Wetland Fact Sheet Polk County, WI

Estimated Acres:	County 612,167	Current Wetlands 76,123	Potentially Restorable Wetlands 22,472
% Land Cover:	100%	12%	4%



- Mapped Wetlands
- Potentially Restorable Wetlands
- Urban & Roads
- Lakes & Rivers

Making wetlands work for your community requires consideration of the location of existing and potentially restorable wetlands (PRWs), and the services these wetlands do or could provide.

This information can be used in planning to set measurable goals for where wetlands can be protected and restored to help solve specific water resource problems. Options to implement wetland priorities include ordinance updates, easement programs, tax incentives, restoration projects, and more.

Community leaders should keep in mind that the most effective solutions to local water resource issues may be located far upstream from where the problems occur - possibly even beyond the boundaries of your county, city, village, or town. Identifying such opportunities requires adopting a watershed perspective (*see reverse*).

The Watershed Perspective — Polk County, Wisconsin

A watershed, also called a drainage basin, is an area of land where all water drains to a single water body. The amount, location, and condition of wetlands in our watersheds influence the quantity and quality of water that flows downstream.

Considering wetlands at a watershed scale helps us better understand the services that wetlands provide and the connections between wetlands and the health of other waters. Even small wetlands are important to watershed health, especially when they are abundant on the landscape.

It is particularly useful to consider how historic wetland losses may have contributed to current water resource management problems. Doing so can help communities identify areas where wetlands could be restored to address flooding, water quality concerns, or other issues.



Additional Information

Maps of potentially restorable wetlands can be viewed on WDNR's Surface Water Data Viewer:

<http://dnrmaps.wi.gov/si/?Viewer=SWDV>⁺⁺

Wetland tools and trainings for local governments:

wisconsinwetlands.org/for-communities/

Types of wetlands in Wisconsin:

wisconsinwetlands.org/learn/about-wetlands/wetland-types/

High quality wetlands in your area:

wisconsinwetlands.org/learn/about-wetlands/explore/

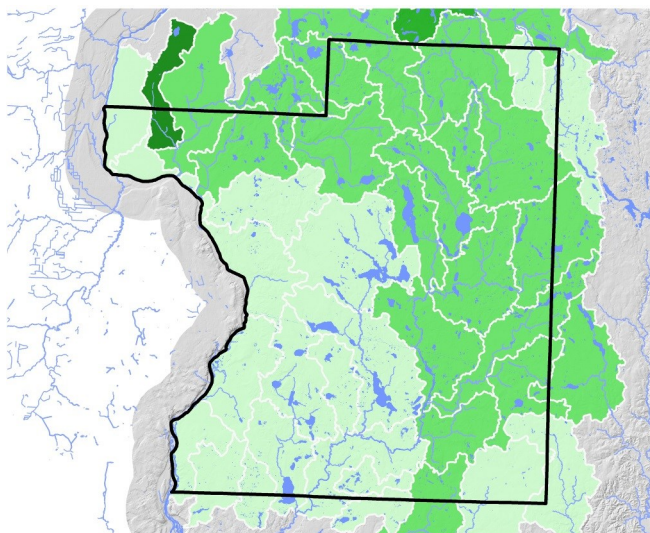
⁺⁺ To view PRW data, click on "Show Layers" and expand the "Wetlands and Soils" folder. See FAQ for download instructions.

Wetland acreage estimates and maps were generated from wetland data provided by WI DNR through version 2 of the PRW mapping project. Version 3 data are currently under review. Significant improvements in identifying restoration opportunities are expected as mapping methods improve.

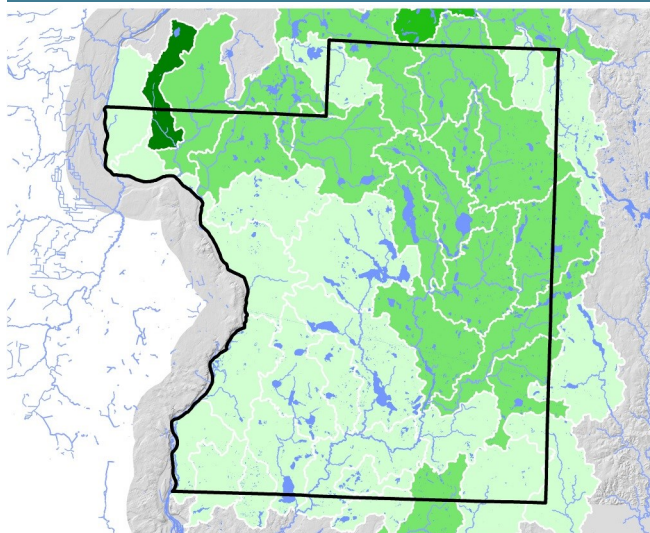
Acknowledgments:

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Historic Wetland Cover



Current Wetland Cover



**Percent cover by
sub-watershed**

< 15%

15 - 30%

30 - 45%

> 45%



**Wisconsin
Wetlands**
ASSOCIATION

Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA) is dedicated to the protection, restoration and enjoyment of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education, and advocacy.