



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
 Division of Agricultural Resource Management
 P.O. Box 8911
 Madison, WI 53708-8911
 (608) 224-4500

Petition to Modify an Agricultural Enterprise Area – Adding Acreage

The undersigned persons hereby petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), pursuant to s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., to *modify* the designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. We have read the guidance provided and submit the following information in support of the petition (*use the space provided or check the appropriate box*):¹

PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Name of designated AEA to modify. Antigo Flats AEA
- B. County or counties in which the AEA is located. Langlade,
Marathon
- C. All towns, villages or cities in which the AEA is located. Ackley, Antigo,
Neva, Peck,
Polar, Price,
Rolling, Vilas,
Harrison
- D. Number of petitioners requesting modification of the AEA². 36 (additional)
- E. Total number of acres proposed for addition. 15,709 (77,987)
- F. All parcels proposed to be added to the existing AEA are located within a farmland preservation area designated in the certified county farmland preservation plan. Yes No
- G. After modification, all parcels within the AEA boundary are contiguous. Yes No
- H. After modification, the AEA remains primarily in agricultural use. Yes No
- I. Designated contacts for the AEA. *Please list at least two contacts for the AEA; preferably at least one staff contact (county, town, UWEX, etc.) and one landowner representative.³ You may have more than two contacts. Attach a separate page if necessary.*

Name: Alex Crockford (Langlade UWEX)
 Address: 837 Clermont St., Antigo, WI 54409
 Phone number: 715-627-6236
 Email: alex.crockford@ces.uwex.edu

Name: Andy Johnson (Marathon County CPZ)
 Address: 210 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403
 Phone number: 715-261-6000
 Email: Andrew.Johnson@co.marathon.wi.us

¹Personal information you provide may be used for purposes other than that for which it was collected, s. 15.04(1)(m), Wis. Stats.

²A minimum of 5 eligible farm owners must sign the modification petition. Not all of these farm owners need to own farms within the modified area. A combination of signatures from farm owners with eligible farms in the area to be added and farm owners with farms in the existing AEA may be used to reach the requisite 5 signatures.

³The listed contacts should be willing to:

- Communicate with other petitioners and partners in the AEA, with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and with contacts in other AEAs
- Engage in activities within the AEA

PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA MODIFICATION⁴

1. State the goals of the proposed modified AEA for

a. preservation of agricultural land use:

There are three goals with the proposed modified AEA. First, recognizing that political geography does not always align with landscape features and that agricultural cluster boundaries are indistinct, the Antigo Flats should be considered as it's whole to include not only 7 towns in Langlade County but also a portion of the Town of Harrison in Marathon County.

Second, landowners and farm operators work lands on both sides of the county line, this will allow mutual preservation of this area as a cluster of like enterprises working the land.

Lastly, we wish to cooperate with Marathon County as an equal partner in recognizing and supporting the Antigo Flats as an area for targeted preservation.

b. agricultural development:

The majority of land within Marathon County is contiguous with the Antigo Flats AEA both with production, markets, services. The land and community is tied to the economic geography of Antigo area agricultural business. Potatoes and processing vegetable crops are grown in the Town of Harrison, Marathon County.

The majority of vegetable production in both Langlade and Marathon counties is within the boundaries of the proposed AEA. The combined sales of vegetables for Langlade County (33.5 million, 2007) and Marathon County (13.7 million, 2007) is \$47.2 million.

With the strong alignment of agriculture within the proposed modification, the area will also have common goals for agricultural development.

The rationale of ag development often includes value-added development and diversification to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for Wisconsin agriculture.

Therefore, the goals for the Antigo Flats AEA include:

- innovation and promotion of area-grown and processed agricultural products. The commercial vegetable industry in Marathon and Langlade Counties within the AEA represents
- further growth and expansion of opportunities for profitable commercial vegetables and livestock operations.
- enhancing support to agricultural business through technical assistance, agricultural education, and research.

⁴ DATCP will evaluate petitions under s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., and will consider information provided in response to the following questions.

2. Explain the reason for the proposed modification and describe how the modification is consistent with, or complements, the goals stated in the original petition.

The modification includes land that is representative of three priorities. The first priority of this proposed modification was to expand the AEA into Marathon County. The second priority is to include parcels owned by participants that were not identified in the original area either from an error on our part or because zoning has changed. The third priority was to include parcels from enthusiastic landowners who bordered the AEA boundaries that had working lands.

The proposed land area remains consistent with the goals in the original application:

- to expand markets for certified seed potatoes, dairy, certified small grain seed, wood products, and new local commodities.
- to increase name recognition
- promote the agricultural and processing identity
- developments for ag tourism.

The land chosen for the modified AEA in the Town of Harrison was selected for potato and vegetable production, is currently in agricultural land use, has supportive landowners, and is contiguous with the current AEA boundaries.

The land added in the Town of Peck, Ackley, Antigo, Neva, and Price are parcels owned by current participants and supporters of this initiative that is in productive agricultural use.

3. Describe any progress made in the already designated AEA with respect to goals stated in the original petition.

The Antigo Flats AEA has been successful at recruiting over 22,000 acres of 15 year agreements within the AEA to preserve the prime soils in our area. Vegetable production continues to be strongly profitable and the new Working Lands program and AEA will return an anticipated \$320,000 to landowners in 2012, up from \$180,000 in 2009 (with farmland tax relief and farmland preservation combined).

Our successes with the program development and recruitment have increased the name recognition of our area statewide. The celebrated status and leadership within this Working Lands initiative has been recognized amongst our colleagues in zoning administration, land conservation, and UW Cooperative Extension statewide. The Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association presented Alex Crockford with the 2011 Industry Appreciation Award for his contributions to the vegetable industry with his involvement with the Antigo Flats AEA.

4. Describe all current land uses of the area proposed for addition. (*The AEA must remain primarily in agricultural use.*)

Agriculture for vegetable crops, dairy forage and grains, forestry use.

5. How did you determine the boundary (location and size) of the area proposed for addition to the AEA?

Marathon County determined their boundary based on selection criteria, prime agricultural soils suitable to potato and vegetable production, land contiguous with the Antigo Flats area, supportive and willing participants.

Additions made to the Langelade County portion represent landowners that wanted to participate, land was prime if drained and suitable for vegetable crops or dairy. Additional parcels of land for landowners who wanted more of their acreage in the program.

6. Confirm that the proposed modification to the AEA is consistent with any existing local comprehensive plan.

The county(ies) of Langelade and Marathon has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed modification to the AEA remains consistent with this plan.

The Town(s) of Harrison has(have) a comprehensive and the proposed modification to the AEA remains consistent with this plan.

There are no comprehensive plans for the political subdivisions in which the proposed modification is located.

7. Indicate the approximate level of petitioner compliance with state soil and water standards in the area proposed for addition.

Nearly all petitioners are in compliance

More than half of the petitioners are in compliance

Half or less than half of the petitioners are in compliance

Few or no petitioners are in compliance

Compliance status of petitioners is unknown

8. Fill in the tables to provide information about the activities (past, ongoing and future) that will support the entire AEA.

A. Farmland Preservation Agreement Strategy	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Summarize these outreach efforts, including who will provide assistance (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational meeting(s)	<p>2011-2012 Langlade County Outreach Efforts: Development of a Antigo Flats AEA website and mapping tool at http://langlade.uwex.edu/ under a drop down menu. Background information and application materials are available as well as the map tool developed by North Central WI Regional Planning Commission. (See screen captures in support materials)</p> <p>An informational meeting was held on January 13th, 2011 at Neva Town Hall by UW Extension, County Land Conservation and Land Records/Regulations Departments. The meeting covered the program for 2010 and 2011 tax years, and also details on sign up for these and 15 year agreements. Powerpoint presentation in support materials.</p> <p>UW Extension Newsletter articles on the AEA activities were in October 2010, February, March 2011, the February mailing included an application for landowners (over 300). UW Extension, Land Conservation and Land Records Departments helped landowners from their department offices during sign-up where we outlined a timeline for sign-up.</p> <p>UW Extension produced several press releases to the Antigo Daily Journal, and Land Conservation had regular updates. In the time since we were designated UW Extension, Land Records and Land Conservation Departments have held two Tax Preparer meetings (Dec 2010 and Dec 2011).</p> <p>In March, UW Extension held a NMP training with 25 farmers interested in the program. See exhibits in support materials section.</p> <p>With 22,000 acres signed up, similar recruitment and compliance efforts are on-going. Additional 15 year agreements are in process.</p> <p>Future efforts include, developing a strategic plan with a stakeholder group, continue working on conservation compliance issues, continued educational work with tax preparers.</p> <p>Following modification of the AEA we will follow a similar process for program promotion and recruitment.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mailing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-on-one conversations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/media	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Website with Map Tool	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Langlade County Board Presentation by UW Extension (describing success of the program in Langlade County)	

Marathon County Recent Efforts:

In Marathon County, Andy Johnson and Diane Wessel of Marathon County Conservation Planning and Zoning conducted 4 AEA information meetings. There was a Working Lands Initiative Workshop at North Central Technical College on March 12, 2009. All landowners of 10 or more acres in the proposed AEA were sent direct mailings describing the program. October 20, 2011 there was a presentation held at the Eastern Towns and Villages Association. There were meetings in the Town of Plover and Harrison near Antigo on December 13 and 28. On January 10 there was a landowner interest meeting held at the Town of Harrison Hall where 6 landowners signed petitions. Since then they have worked with landowners to prepare boundary maps and collect more petitions.

Marathon Ongoing Efforts:

- Develop and/or update Conservation Plans for all landowners.
- Perform 100-125 Status Reviews to ensure compliance with Program Standards.
- Track program participation including zoning certificates, transfers, and relinquishments.
- Conduct an annual self-certification.
- Assist landowners and private sector with Nutrient Management education and plan development.

Marathon Future Efforts:

After successful modification of AEA, work with participating towns to initiate new farmland preservation agreements with eligible landowners.

- Update Farmland Preservation Zoning.
- Update and implement the Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan.
- Develop and maintain a strong economically viable agricultural infrastructure.
- Utilize the AEA as a vehicle of opportunity to formalize relationships between the petitioners and the agribusiness community.
- Create new agribusiness ventures that grow the local economy and advance state and local agricultural goals.
- Build upon the existing agribusiness relationships that exist between producers, processors, and consumers to identify areas for future infrastructure development.
- Assist landowners, towns, and counties with developing farmland preservation strategies through the use of agricultural enterprise areas.
- Promote the concept of "brick and mortar" agribusiness parks and assist with new research and development of agribusiness incubation.
- Encourage agricultural producers and agribusinesses to partner to invest and adopt new conservation-oriented technologies that efficiently utilize the economies of scale created by the preservation of large blocks of contiguous farmland.

B. Land Use Controls

<i>Type of Control</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Provide details about the selected control (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation zoning ordinance	on-going	<p>Langlade County has Exclusive Agricultural Zoning in all AEA towns. The zoning began in 1985.</p> <p>Marathon County: Past – Marathon County adopted Exclusive Agricultural Zoning 05/21/1980 Ongoing – The town of Harrison does not have farmland preservation zoning. Future – The town of Harrison will consider adopting farmland preservation zoning.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other zoning ordinances Specify: none	future	<p>Langlade County has no town zoning</p> <p>Marathon County - Town Harrison is currently un-zoned. The town is considering adopting zoning in conjunction with the update of the farmland preservation zoning.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation agreements	past, on-going, and future	<p>Langlade County has a number of on-going agreements that are still in place, 66 new 15 year agreements from 2011, and expects many additional agreements in 2012 (15 in various stages currently.)</p> <p>Marathon County adopted the Farmland Preservation Plan in 1982. Dept Report: History of Preserving Farmland in Marathon Co, 1978-2011: http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=kse2laZS66l%3d&tabid=598</p> <p>With the Town of Harrison there are two Farmland Preservation Agreements: 2 contracts totaling 573.33 acres Town of Harrison has 2 agreements, 573.33 acres</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of development rights; and/or easements (donated or purchased)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of development rights		

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subdivision ordinances	on-going	<p>Langlade County has a county wide land division ordinance available per request at Langlade County Land Records and Regulations Department (715-627-6206)</p> <p>Land division in the town of Harrison are regulated by the Marathon County land division and surveying regulations (adopted 06/05/1968): http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=56undLue73o%3d&tabid=343</p> <p>Marathon County continues to work with property owners, the towns, and the county to enforce land division and surveying regulations.</p> <p>The future will require updating the existing land division and surveying regulations as necessary and consider adopting town land division regulations.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative boundary agreements		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural area protections	ongoing	<p>Langlade County has protections included in the Zoning and Land Division Ordinances.</p> <p>Marathon County, Town of Harrison shorelands (1000' from lakes, 300' from streams) and wetlands are regulated by Marathon County shoreland regulations and provisions (Ch 17.30 of the Marathon County Code of ordinances http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=plZRRWjU7x4%3d&tabid=343)</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		

C. Agricultural Development Activities

<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Summarize contribution to AEA (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Joint marketing or purchasing, development of agri-tourism opportunity, value-added agricultural activity</i>		
AEA Strategic Plan Development	ongoing-future	UW Extension has been developing a list of stakeholders to engage in developing a strategic plan for the Antigo Flats AEA. The group will develop a mission and purpose statement, identify issues and opportunities within our agricultural cluster, create a list of strategic issues, develop a multi-year plan of work, including a framework for reassessment.
Cooperative relationships (Marathon County)	future	Marathon County will enter into relationships with University of Wisconsin – Discovery Farms, agricultural producers, and agri-business to assist processing and production businesses to evaluating the growth of their businesses. Specifically, we will evaluate the natural resources assets required to support their business to assure that the groundwater and soil assets are adequate to support growth. We will also assist in the conservation planning of growth to assure compliance with state agricultural performance standards.
Joint marketing opportunities (Marathon County)	future	Marathon County will facilitate training and outreach to the diverse agri-businesses to develop and realize market opportunities for products. Specifically, we will support producers who are utilizing organic and managed grazing production models, as well as direct marketed produce.
Shared facilities or equipment (Marathon County)	future	Marathon County will purchase and rent agricultural production and manure handling equipment to help producers to adopt new technologies. Specifically, we will offer the use of no-till, pasture renovation, and drill equipment for producers utilizing Best Management Practices aimed at reducing soil erosion on cropland. Furthermore, we will pursue the development of improved manure distribution strategies to apply livestock manures to cropland. Examples of new technologies include drag line injection equipment and anaerobic digestion. Not only will we pursue and support technologies for management and economic benefits to agricultural producers, we will assure that local agri-businesses understand the economic opportunities in providing these technologies and services to the producer.

Information, promotion, and advocacy (Marathon County)	future	<p>Marathon County will actively promote and educate the AEA communities in the economic opportunities for both agri-business and producers. Specifically, we will provide education on the concept of clusters in growing a strong economy. We will provide outreach to tax professionals to assure that they are aware of the landowner incentives and benefits to participate.</p> <p>Staff will attend AEA training seminars and economic development activities to maximize the participation of landowners in the AEA. We will share information with any existing and potential businesses of grant or business development assistance available to help grow the AEA's economic base. Marathon County will promote the regional branding opportunities to draw attention to our AEA's.</p> <p>Marathon County will target administrative, financial, and technical assistance to AEA's to help participating landowners grow their businesses and to meet conservation and land use requirements.</p>
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D. Other AEA Activities		
<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Summarize contribution to AEA (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Form a stakeholder group, attend statewide AEA meetings</i>		
Attendance to the AEA Forum in 2011	past	<p>Langlade County UWEX, Zoning, and Conservation Department personnel attended the program with the Exec. Director of the WPVGA</p> <p>Andy Johnson of Marathon County Conservation Planning and Zoning was also in attendance</p>
Formation of a stakeholder group	future	So that we are unified in our effort to develop initiatives that are comprehensive and far-reaching, regular meetings of the AEA stakeholder group will be held.
Tax Preparer Meeting	past/future	December 2010, December 2011, December 2012
Development of a Strategic Plan	future	This is listed in Ag Development Activities because activities are potential outcomes of the strategic plan. The process of plan development is in and of itself an worthwhile activity.