

Scuppernong AEA

Jefferson County

Towns of Cold Spring, Hebron, Palmyra and Sullivan

PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA

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

1. What are the agricultural land use and development goals of the proposed AEA?

Include a discussion of proposed agricultural uses and agricultural-related uses, including a discussion of relevant infrastructure in the AEA. Explain how the proposed AEA will advance the state's goal of agricultural preservation and development. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.

This area is a microcosm of agriculture in Wisconsin. It is representative of a wide range of farming practices, including smaller family dairy farms (i.e. less than 200 cows), beef and broiler grazing farms, certified organic farms, farms utilizing conventional farming practices, crop farms raising row crops and forage crops, equine training facilities, managed woodlands, small patches of restored prairie, many, many acres of wildlife habitat in fencerows and small pockets, large vegetable farms, a large layer confinement facility, and a large farm and related factory producing and manufacturing vitamins and nutritional supplements. It offers employment opportunities to non-farming community residents. It is large enough to provide opportunities for internal stability and close enough to necessary infrastructure for multidirectional flow of goods and services.

In 2000, Jefferson County enacted what was arguably the best agricultural land use plan in Wisconsin at the time. Recognizing the value and importance of Jefferson County's agriculture and the tremendous pressure from the residential development industry to split up farms for short-term gains, the residents of Jefferson County, together with county agencies and government, drafted the "2020 Land Use Plan" for Jefferson County. A zoning ordinance designed to protect farmland while allowing some residential development was crafted from this plan. All 16 towns endorsed the County Plan. Although Jefferson County zoning has played an indispensable role in controlling rural residential development in this area, as the economy begins to revive, even under current zoning, there is still the potential for a great deal of residential development. It is also likely that there will be increased pressure to weaken the current zoning rules. The scenic drumlin fields within the northern portion of the proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area are attractive to those wishing to purchase land for the construction of McMansion homes where there is easy access to large cities and international airports. The location of this area, between two major state highways and 10 miles from Interstate 94, located in the east side of Jefferson County, and one hop over the Waukesha County line, makes it very vulnerable to development pressure, especially from the east.

The goal of the proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area is to create a climate where current and future landowners within this area are able to feel comfortable about the sustainability of their agricultural investments. This is a very diverse agricultural area. There are a mix of conventional and certified organic farms. Many farms within this area are multigenerational farms. There are also several farms which are owned and operated by extended families. There are upland farms on the northern end of the area which are devoted to pasture, row crops, forage crops, managed forestland, dairying, beef and broiler production, and an equine training facility. As the land slopes to the south, there is a very large vegetable farm, a large farm raising and manufacturing nutritional supplements and vitamins, and a poultry (layer CAFO) operation which composts and pelletizes its manure for use as fertilizer. There are also farms employing corn, soybean, alfalfa rotations on the lower ground. Farms in the Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area range in size from small (less than 100 acres) to medium (100 to 400 acres) to large (400 to over 3,000 acres).

We believe this is an area well worth preserving for agricultural production for future generations.

2. What activities are planned in the proposed AEA to achieve the agricultural preservation and development goals?

A 250 acre farm which currently grazes beef cattle and broilers is applying for equip grants to improve fencing and establish a more efficient watering system. Town and Country Resource Conservation and Development has hosted agricultural education events in the past and has more planned for the future. Kincaid Enterprises has recently transitioned some of their land to certified organic status to enable them to enter that expanding market with their vegetables. An equine re-homing program has applied for and received grant monies for the construction of sheds. The Drumlin Area Land Trust is actively working with area landowners to assist them in selling conservation easements and one application has been submitted to Jefferson County Farmland Preservation Committee and will be submitted to NRCS FRPP program and WI PACE program. Town and Country Resource Conservation and Development is working with several farmers in this area to develop grazing plans and will be hosting grazing seminars in the upcoming months. Agri-tourism events focused on public education targeting food production have been held in the past and are currently being planned for the future. A small campground located within the area attracts folks from Illinois who purchase meat and produce from area farmers. Managed grazing education and technical assistance have been and will continue to be provided through the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative within this area. Standard Process, a large producer and manufacturer of nutritional supplements, gives tours of its facility on a regular basis and offers educational opportunities for its employees.

3. How will the AEA location promote agricultural preservation and development?

Explain what is special about this location. Include why the proposed AEA is geographically well “targeted” for agricultural preservation and development. Explain how the geographic distribution of existing agricultural uses and related infrastructure helped determine the location (see next). Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.

This location is historically agricultural, and while there has been some residential development nearby, there is still adequate infrastructure to maintain a strong agricultural base. S&R (Cold Spring Egg Farm) offers the opportunity for the purchase of reasonably priced fertilizer, while also offering a market for corn and soybeans. There are feed mills and fertilizer retailers within a reasonable distance which both buy raw materials and sell finished products.(CPI, FS, Frank Organic); the Interstate Highway system nearby offers ready access to more distant markets (S&R’s CPM (composted chicken manure) is sold as far away as Minnesota, and product from Standard Process is sold nation-wide, and the area is served by rail—very positive at a time when rail transport is being targeted for expansion. Nearby machinery dealers and repair facilities support equipment needs (Triebold, Kundert, Jackels, Bert’s Tires, to name a few). Nearby lumber and steel yards offer used and new materials for agricultural building projects; there are veterinary services within a few minutes of this area and it is within a county which supports the preservation of agricultural lands. The proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area is also well situated in the Madison/Milwaukee/Chicago triangle to offer the opportunity for farms within its boundaries to serve as agri-tourism destinations and to access viable growing direct market opportunities. There are four custom meat processing facilities within one hour or less of the area (Twin City Pack, Sorg’s, Cedar Ridge Meats, Country Meat Cutters). This area has ample fe-chargeable ground water resources to support existing and future livestock and crop production.

4. How did you determine the size and the boundary of the proposed AEA?

Explain why the size and boundaries are appropriate, and will help “focus” preservation development efforts. As part of the explanation, include a discussion of agricultural uses and infrastructure, unique

land resources, soil productivity, proximity to viable farm markets or processing facilities, and other relevant factors. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.

The boundaries have been drawn thus because this area seems to have been agriculturally diverse enough to thus far resist the need or temptation to sell residential parcels for short term gain. To date, the vast majority of landowners in this area have been committed to agricultural production and preservation for several generations. The diversity of the area offers the opportunity for sustainable agriculture in the near and distant future. S&R Egg Farm is a dependable market for corn and soybeans, as well as a source of pelleted fertilizer. The village of Palmyra (adjacent to the area) and the nearby city of Whitewater are served by rail, and the rail system is utilized by local agricultural and related businesses. Within 10 miles of this area, there are feed mills that purchase and sell grains, etc. (FS in Palmyra, Frank Organic in Jefferson, FS in Jefferson, CPI in Whitewater), there are two machinery dealers, (Triebold's Implement near Whitewater and Kundert Machinery in Fort Atkinson,) there is a highly valued and much used machinery parts and repair facility within 10 miles of this area (Jaeckels), and there are various other businesses which support agriculture within the nearby area. There are veterinary clinics within a short distance of the area. Fort Atkinson and Whitewater have viable Farmers' Markets and farmers within the designated area sell product at the Milwaukee Market.

Unique land resources within the proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area include many acres of undrained wetland which act to replenish and purify groundwater and forested lands which help to control erosion and sequester carbon. The Prince's Point wildlife area is adjacent and also serves as an agricultural support area. Unlike many areas of Wisconsin, this area is unique in its abundant, rechargeable source of groundwater available for livestock and crop production. The extremely fertile soils are some of the best in the world. The uplands feed the lowland aquifer, and their continued use in responsible agriculture will assure that the abundant supply of clean groundwater is maintained in the lowland areas.

Agricultural uses which also provide a positive net sequestration of carbon are hay and other non-row crop forages as well as pasture and vegetated fence rows.

5. What are the current land uses within the proposed AEA?

Provide documentation to show that the proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use. Describe the percentage and distribution of agricultural and agriculture-related uses; residential uses; transportation, utility, energy and communications uses; undeveloped natural resource and open space uses; and other uses as applicable. Identify the principal types of agricultural use and describe the location, geographic scope, size, significance and compatibility of those agricultural uses. Describe current trends and emerging issues within the proposed area. Attach a land use map for the area to support this explanation (at the town or county scale).

The primary land uses within this area are agricultural. Prince's Point Wildlife Area is adjacent to the area. The upland areas are primarily used for row crops, small grains, hay production, and pasture. The lowlands are used for row-crop vegetable production, small grains, forage crops, row crops, and pasture. Please see attached land use information from Jefferson County Zoning office. Until the new Farmland Preservation Plan is finished in 2002, this is the most recent information available. However, there has been little change. Although the area is served by ample transportation corridors, they take up a minimal amount of the area. There is a natural gas pipeline right of way which is buried and does not impact agricultural use, there is one cell tower which occupies a 2 acre parcel. There appears to be no incompatibility of uses within this area. There is a small campground within the area which attracts folks from Chicago.

6. How is the proposed AEA consistent with your other local land use plans?

The entire proposed AEA must be located within a farmland preservation area designation in the county's certified farmland preservation plan (please document). Explain how the proposed AEA is

consistent with existing county and local land use plans. If there are inconsistencies, explain how they will be reconciled. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.

This area is located within an agricultural zone. All 4 towns involved are covered by Jefferson County's 2020 Land Use Plan. Jefferson County has a county-wide Farmland Preservation Plan. There are no inconsistencies with county and local land use plans.

7. What nonagricultural development trends affect the proposed AEA?

Explain current development trends affecting the proposed AEA. Describe the likelihood that land in the AEA will transition out of agriculture in the foreseeable future (note that an AEA may not include any area planned for nonagricultural development within the next 15 years). Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.

Currently this area is blessed with the vast majority of landowners wishing to preserve their land for agricultural use. Furthermore, much of the drained wetland resources are not suited for residential development, but there is constant pressure from the residential real estate community attempting to get landowners to split off parcels for residential development. Creation of the proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area will encourage landowners to resist the temptation to divide for residential development. There are **currently** no non-agricultural development trends affecting the area, nor are we aware of any that are planned.

8. How will current or proposed land use controls support the proposed AEA?

Describe current and proposed land use controls such as zoning ordinances (farmland preservation, shoreland, wetland), farmland preservation agreements, easements, subdivision ordinances, natural area protections or other similar controls. If the area is zoned, attach a zoning map for the area (at the town or county scale). Attach documentation, where appropriate.

Jefferson County zoning as well as the fact that Jefferson County has county-wide farmland preservation will support this AEA. Furthermore, land enrolling in the Wisconsin Pace program and NRCS FRPP programs will assure support for the area. It is hoped that creation of Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area will encourage landowners to sell or donate conservation easements on their land to assure preservation for the distant future.

9. How will the proposed AEA promote compliance with the state's soil and water standards for nonpoint source pollution?

Farmers in an AEA who enter into a farmland preservation agreement must meet the following state standards (ATCP 50, Wis. Adm. Code), to claim a tax credit. Please indicate whether any of the petitioners are already in compliance with these standards. Explain how the proposed AEA will promote compliance with conservation standards. Attach documentation, where appropriate.

- Control of soil erosion
- Nutrient management planning
- Prevention of direct runoff from feedlots or stored manure into state waters
- Prevention of overflowing manure storage structures
- Repair of failing and leaking manure storage structures and closure of abandoned manure storage structures
- Construction of new or substantially altered manure storage structures to technical standards
- No stacking of manure in unconfined piles in water quality management areas
- Diversion of clean water from feedlots, manure storage areas and barnyards in the water quality management area
- Maintenance of self-sustaining sod cover along waterways

The standards above are currently being met by almost all of the landowners within the Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area. Participation in county-wide Farmland Preservation in Jefferson County is strong. One farm which does not participate is certified organic and thus is held to the same standards. With the new Farmland Preservation Program, new nutrient management plans will be written for all farms in the program.

10. How will the proposed AEA promote agricultural and related investment?

Describe current and proposed investment within the AEA. Identify key current and potential investors and their level of commitment. Explain how the AEA will promote or facilitate agricultural and related investment. Attach documentation, where appropriate.

Farmers will be more likely to invest in their operations when they can be assured that the area will remain viable for agricultural use. S&R(Cold Spring Egg Farm) has invested heavily in their manure pelleting facility and recently expanded and Kincaid Enterprises has transitioned some land to certified organic status.

11. How will the proposed AEA support economic activity within the community?

Explain how the AEA will promote economic activity between agricultural enterprises or between agricultural and nonagricultural enterprises. This may include, for example, joint marketing opportunities, purchase of feed, shared facilities and equipment, custom manure spreading or other opportunities. Attach documentation, where appropriate.

Standard Process, S&R (Cold Spring Egg Farm) and Kincaid Enterprises all employ people from the surrounding area. At least two farms within the area attend local and distant farmer’s markets to direct market their produce. A non-profit equine re-homing program utilizes the equine training center and sponsors events which bring people in from out of state as well as out of county. Livestock producers utilize the services of local veterinarians, and farmers within the area trade at local mills and implement dealers, as well as with one another. S&R (Cold Spring Egg Farm) contracts with local folks who custom spread manure pellets for area farmers.

12. What is the level of cooperator support for this petition?

Describe the level of support by other farmers, and by affected businesses, community organizations, and government entities. Attach cooperator “signature pages,” if any.

As evidenced by the attached signature pages, there is a high level of support for this project. All 4 towns and Jefferson County are supportive, as well as individual farmers, local businesses and consumers.

Are there any other compelling reasons to choose this AEA proposal from among competing AEA proposals? Explain, and attach documentation where appropriate.

The proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area has a strong history of agriculture. It is large enough to create opportunities for internal economic interaction, and small enough to maintain a sense of community. It is very representative of agriculture in Wisconsin. Ample workforce and infrastructure exist within the area. The proposed Scuppernong Agricultural Enterprise Area is strategically located to bring education to the public about the value of Wisconsin Agriculture. Extremely compelling issues are the fertile soils and the abundant, rechargeable supply of groundwater.

PART III. MAP AND SPATIAL LOCATION DATA

Please send all of the following information, in electronic form, to: DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov (enter “AEA Petition” in the subject line):

1. A map of the proposed AEA that shows:

- The proposed AEA boundary.
- The boundaries of all land parcels within the proposed AEA.
- Labels to identify farm parcels owned by persons signing this petition.
- Major features such as roads and surface water resources.
- Political boundaries lying within the proposed AEA, including any boundaries of counties, towns, villages, cities or drainage districts.

2. The spatial location data used to create the map. Please follow the attached MAP AND SPATIAL DATA GUIDELINES.

Landowner Signature Page

The petition must be signed by the owners of at least 5 eligible farms within the proposed AEA. A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a husband and wife as individuals, both must sign.

Farm owner (correct legal name or legal name of business entity): _____

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

Corporation

Partnership

LLC

Other (describe) _____

Authorized signature _____ Date _____

Print name of signer _____

Authorized signature _____ Date _____

Print name of signer _____

Farm address: _____

Farm owner address: _____

Contact phone number: _____

Petitioner information

I (we) already have a farmland preservation agreement with the state. Yes No

I (we) are interested in entering into a farmland preservation agreement. Yes No
(Note: To enter into a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Political Subdivision Signature Page

The petition must be signed by every political subdivision (county, town, city or village) in which any part of the proposed AEA is included. A separate signature page, in the following form, must be attached for each political subdivision. This signature page must be signed by an authorized officer or representative of the political subdivision.

Political subdivision name: _____

Type (check one): County Town City Village

Printed name of authorized officer or representative: _____

Title of authorized officer or representative: _____

Authorized signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal mailing Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Acreage of land in proposed AEA located in political subdivision: _____ acres

Cooperator Petitioner Signature Page (optional)

Other persons (cooperators) may sign in support of the petition. A separate signature page, in the following form, is required for each cooperator. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity.

Legal name of cooperator: _____

Relevant interest (farm owner, business, nonprofit or community organization, government entity, other): _____

Principal mailing Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Briefly describe your interest in signing this petition for designation of an agricultural enterprise area:

I have read this petition and support the designation of the proposed area as an AEA.

Print name _____

Authorized signature: _____ Date _____