



State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Ben Brancel, Secretary

DATE: September 3, 2015
TO: Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
FROM: Ben Brancel, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 John Petty, Administrator, Agricultural Resource Management Division
SUBJECT: Report on AEAs recommended for designated in 2015

Ben Brancel

The Agricultural Enterprise Area evaluation team met on June 9, 2015 to review the five AEA petitions received during this petition cycle. The team recommended the designation of two new AEAs and the modification of one existing AEA (Table 1). Additional information about each of these areas is provided in Appendix A. Designation of the remaining two agricultural enterprise areas were not recommended for this petition cycle.

Table 1: AEAs recommended for designation

Proposed Name	Size (modified size)	AEA Location
Golden Triangle AEA	21,394	<i>Eau Claire County:</i> Towns of Washington, Lincoln, Otter Creek, Bridge Creek
Greenville Greenbelt AEA*	4,758 (6,178)	<i>Outagamie County:</i> Town of Greenville
Scenic Ridge and Valley AEA	62,494	<i>Monroe County:</i> Towns of Jefferson, Portland, Wells

*Modification

AEAs not recommended for designation

Two of the petitions submitted this round were not recommended for designation during this petition cycle. The petitioners were encouraged to consider resubmitting in a future petition cycle after spending time to further engage with the community and to continue to develop their petition. Strong petitions show wide-spread community support for the designation of the area. Use of a public process during petition development helps to engage landowners, producers, local governments, and others in the proposed area to ensure awareness and support for continued agricultural land use and the designation as an AEA.

Table 2: AEAs not recommended for designation

Proposed Name	AEA Location
Cadott Area AEA*	<i>Chippewa County:</i> Towns of Arthur and Goetz
North-West Pierce County AEA	<i>Pierce County:</i> Towns of Clifton, River Falls, Martell

*Proposed modification

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Summary of AEAs statewide

Designation of the recommended AEAs is completed by departmental order, with notification of the order posted in the state newspaper. Following notification, the designation takes effect on January 1, 2016. After designation of the three successful petitions there will be 31 AEAs in the state totaling just over 1,000,000 acres. The AEAs are located in portions of 23 counties, 92 towns and the Bad River Reservation (See Appendix B). Nearly 1,400 landowners have signed the petitions requesting designation as an AEA. Hundreds of letters of support from other landowners, neighboring cities and villages, business owners and other interested parties have also been received.

Farmland preservation agreements in AEAs

The department continues to work with the AEAs to encourage landowners to apply for farmland preservation agreements. To date, the department has enrolled 485 farmland preservation agreements covering 104,000 acres.

Attachment A: Summary of the 2015 AEAs recommended for designation

Attachment B: Map of designated and recommended AEAs

Appendix A: Summary of the 2015 AEAs recommended for designation

GOLDEN TRIANGLE AEA (2015)

Overview

- ◆ Eau Claire County: Towns of Washington, Lincoln, Otter Creek, Bridge Creek
- ◆ 21,394 acres
- ◆ 26 petitioners
- ◆ Grain production and dairy farming

Goals

- ◆ Preserve highly productive farmland by limiting conversion of farmland for other uses
- ◆ Encourage agricultural development that will support local agriculture-related businesses and the local communities
- ◆ Support and strengthen an environment and economy capable of supporting the next generation of farmers
- ◆ Leverage proximity to local markets for locally produced agricultural products
- ◆ Promote small-scale agricultural businesses
- ◆ Support the local food movement through local food cooperatives, farmers markets, CSA organizations, supermarkets, and other distribution and marketing efforts

Items of Note

- ◆ Diverse array of agricultural producers, processors and agriculture-related businesses
- ◆ Majority of agricultural products produced in the AEA are consumed within the county
- ◆ Area is served by a well-developed transportation network including federal and state highways and the Union Pacific rail lines
- ◆ Strong local support for the designation garnered through public outreach process

GREENVILLE GREENBELT AEA (2014; MODIFIED 2015)

Overview

- ◆ Outagamie County: Town of Greenville
- ◆ 6,178 acres
- ◆ 17 petitioners
- ◆ Cash cropping

Goals

- ◆ Ensure that agricultural land identified through town and county planning efforts remains in agricultural use
- ◆ Increase development densities in the urban portion of the Town through subdivision ordinances, and/or development of TDR and PDR programs
- ◆ Establish controls on residential development to promote infill development and to target land adjacent to urban areas
- ◆ Expand the boundary of the AEA to encompass more agricultural land in the Town of Greenville
- ◆ Promote and support good agricultural land management and waste management efforts on private lands
- ◆ Support economic opportunities associated with farming
- ◆ Support the development of 'grow/eat local' efforts
- ◆ Provide support to ensure the successful transition of existing farm businesses

Items of Note

- ◆ Extensive planning efforts over the past 10 years support continued agricultural land use in the area
- ◆ Significant effort to provide education and outreach on the importance of the "Greenville Greenbelt"
- ◆ Numerous ag-tourism opportunities and individual investments in the Town of Greenville highlight the agricultural heritage of the area
- ◆ Recent investments in agricultural businesses and the local technical college support continued agriculture in the area

SCENIC RIDGE AND VALLEY AEA (2015)

Overview

- ◆ Monroe County; Towns of Jefferson, Portland, Wells
- ◆ 62,494 acres
- ◆ 91 petitioners
- ◆ Dairy, forestry, cash grain

Goals

- ◆ Preserve farmland for future generations by retaining and promoting agriculture education, business, and jobs.
- ◆ Continue the conservation ethic and strong history of farmers practicing conservation to maintain productive soils and protect water quality.
- ◆ Retain existing ag business and support new investments.

Items of Note

- ◆ Located within the headwaters of 5 significant watersheds; Middle Kickapoo River, West Fort of Kickapoo, Coon Creek, Upper La Crosse River and Little La Crosse River.
- ◆ History of land stewardship and participation in soil and water conservation programs.
- ◆ Presence of good agricultural infrastructure, including infrastructure to support investments in organic agriculture.
- ◆ Largest organic producing area (approximately 5,000 acres) in Wisconsin.

Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)

