

Natural Resources Institute

UW–Madison Division of Extension

At the crossroads of natural resources and society

From water and forestry programs to youth environmental education and conservation training, our outreach specialists, educators, researchers, affiliates, and support teams work at the intersection of knowledge and action. We **tackle complex challenges**, **foster meaningful dialogue**, and **empower the next generation of community leaders**.

One of three institutes in Extension's Agriculture, Natural Resources & Community Development Program Area, we embody the Wisconsin Idea – fueling innovation and working in tandem with partners to create a future where people and nature thrive – side by side. We are committed to providing the information and leadership needed to grow healthy, thriving communities and support resilient, productive natural resources, food systems, and economies.

Natural Resources Institute Structure

PROGRAM AREAS

- Forestry and Wildlife
- Water
- Community Engaged Science and Education

RESERVES AND CENTERS

- Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center
- Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey

NATURAL RESOURCES AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

- Center for Land Use Education (UW–Stevens Point)
- Extension Lakes Program (UW–Stevens Point)
- Wisconsin Forestry Center (UW–Stevens Point)
- Center for Watershed Science and Education (UW–Stevens Point)
- Wisconsin Center for Wildlife (UW–Stevens Point)
- Wisconsin State Climatology Office (UW–Madison)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Evaluation
- Instructional Design
- Marketing and Communications

Areas of Expertise

- Accessibility
- Basic and Applied Research
- Community Science
- Data Acquisition and Network Analysis
- Graphic Design
- Partnership Building and Multistate Collaborations
- Organization Capacity Building
- Program Development and Evaluation
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Watershed Planning and Facilitation
- Youth and Adult Education



Focus Areas

Community Engaged Science and Education

Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center

fyi.extension.wisc.edu/uphamwoods



Upham Woods is a residential, year-round, outdoor learning center for youth and youth leaders, offering environmental education and outdoor recreation programs, summer and family camps, professional development workshops, and conferences and retreats. The center serves as an innovative outdoor laboratory that connects youth and adults with positive outdoor experiences that create individual connection to nature, support understanding of science, and foster engaged citizenry. Through our programs, Upham Woods aims to ignite curiosity, cultivate leadership, and create a lasting impact on the natural world and the communities we serve.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Amy Workman

Water Action Volunteers (WAV)

wateractionvolunteers.org



The WAV stream monitoring program is an ongoing partnership between Extension, the WDNR, and over 40 partner organizations and watershed volunteer groups. WAV aims to protect and restore Wisconsin's 86,000+ miles of streams and rivers by training and empowering volunteers to collect high-quality data on their local streams and to share their data, knowledge, and passion for stewardship with others. More than 500 volunteers monitor nearly 600 stream locations each year.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Katy Bradford

Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program

wimasternaturalist.org



The Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program is a network of well-informed volunteers and instructors dedicated to conservation education and community service. The Master Naturalist training provides 40 hours of primarily field-based experiences covering topics related to Wisconsin's natural world and human connections with nature. Partner organizations, such as state parks, nature centers, and friends groups, host trainings across the state. Equipped with new knowledge, experiences, and connections, Master Naturalists then go on to serve stewardship, citizen science, and education efforts in Wisconsin and continue their learning through advanced trainings.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Becky Sapper

UW-Green Bay Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Amy Carrozzino-Lyon, Restoration Specialist

Earth Sciences

Wisconsin State Climatology Office (SCO)

<https://climatology.nelson.wisc.edu/>

The Wisconsin State Climatology Office collects, analyzes, and shares climate information with Wisconsin communities while leading the way in climate science education and research. The office is part of UW–Madison's Rural Partnerships Institute, a campuswide organization supporting Wisconsin's rural and Tribal communities. SCO is collaboratively supported by the Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research, the Division of Extension, and the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Steve Vavrus

Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey (WGNHS)

wgnhs.wisc.edu

A state institution since 1897, WGNHS provides objective scientific research and information about the geology, mineral resources, and water resources of Wisconsin through publications, technical talks, and responses to inquiries from the public. These activities support informed decision-making by government, industry and business leaders, and the citizens of Wisconsin.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Sue Swanson

Land and Forest Stewardship

Center for Land Use Education (CLUE)

uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue

CLUE is a focal point for land use planning and management education. Through applied research, teaching, outreach, and spatial analysis, CLUE supports local government officials, communities, organizations, and students to make informed land use decisions. We focus on a range of topics, including conservation and community planning, zoning and subdivision regulations, bio- and renewable energy, climate change, and land use impacts on water quality.

EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: *Vacant*

Conservation Professional Training Program

conservationprotraining.org



The Conservation Professional Training program has developed a portfolio of 50+ conservation courses in online, classroom, field, and hybrid formats. Working in collaboration with partners like USDA NRCS, WDNR, and others, the program offers full-service curriculum and course development and delivery on topics like conservation planning, nutrient management, soil health, forestry, and more.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Kevin Erb

Forestry Natural Resource Educators

woodlandinfo.org

Extension Forestry Natural Resource Educators lead classes and build programs to engage landowners in the sustainable management of Wisconsin's privately owned forests. Signature programs include Learn About Your Land; Women Owning Woodlands; Your Land, Your Legacy; Agroforestry; Maple Syrup; Climate Resilience; and the Wisconsin Stewardship Plan Project. Since mid-2019, more than 2,000 woodland owners and family members have attended our in-person and online events, representing a total of 100,000 acres of woodlands.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Kris Tiles

Wisconsin Forestry Center (WFC)

uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/wfc

As an outreach center in the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point in collaboration with the UW-Madison Division of Extension, the WFC is dedicated to serving the needs of Wisconsin's forestry community through partner-driven professional and workforce development, applied research, and community outreach initiatives that promote vibrant, sustainable forests and forest-based economies.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Steven Hubbard

UW-Madison Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Scott Bowe, Professor and Wood Products Specialist

UW-Stevens Point Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Austin Holland, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist
- Lynn Markham, Shoreland and Land Use Specialist

Water Resource Management

Center for Watershed Science and Education

uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/watershed

The Center for Watershed Science and Education helps individuals, organizations, and private and public water resource professionals understand water quality and quantity in private wells, groundwater, lakes, and rivers. Center staff provide guidance on sampling and data collection, education on water quantity and quality, and interpretation and evaluation of monitoring results. Research priorities include nitrate in soil and groundwater, the quantity and chemistry of groundwater, changes in lake water quality, and the occurrence of pharmaceuticals and pesticides in the water.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Kevin Masarik

Extension Lakes Program

uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/uwexlakes

Based at UW–Stevens Point, the Extension Lakes Program seeks to preserve Wisconsin's legacy of lakes through education, communication, and collaboration. The program works with more than 800 local lake associations and lake districts in Wisconsin, assisting them through education and capacity building. Extension Lakes also partners with the WDNR to coordinate a number of programs and projects to assist those concerned with the future of our lakes, including the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network, the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program, and the Lake Leaders Institute. The Lake Tides newsletter reaches thousands of readers throughout the region with timely content on lake management and protection.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Eric Olson

Lake Superior Collaborative

lakesuperiorcollaborative.org



The Lake Superior Collaborative is a network of organizations working in partnership to coordinate protection, restoration, and climate resilience efforts in the Wisconsin portion of the Lake Superior watershed. The collaborative is coordinated by UW–Madison Extension and is composed of local governments; state, Tribal, and federal government agencies; academic institutions; and nonprofit organizations working within the Lake Superior Basin of Wisconsin.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Catie Geib

Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (Lake Superior Reserve)

lakesuperiornerr.org



The Lake Superior Reserve is one of 30 National Estuarine Research Reserves across the United States designated by NOAA to protect and study coastal ecosystems in collaboration with and service to surrounding communities. The Reserve is dedicated to research, education, outreach, and stewardship along Lake Superior's coast. Comprised exclusively of public lands and waters, the Reserve contains about 16,000 acres of the St. Louis River estuary, diverse wetlands, and upland forests. Visit the Lake Superior Estuarium in Superior, where interactive exhibits tell stories of the estuary, Lake Superior, and the communities on their shores.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Deanna Erickson

Water Natural Resource Educators

Extension Water Natural Resource Educators work across Wisconsin watersheds to support producer-led groups, demonstration farms, and community organizations in stewarding water resources. They guide watershed planning, interpret water quality data, and foster collaboration among farmers, lake groups, and other stakeholders to improve water quality. Through targeted outreach and training, they connect conservation practices to water quality outcomes, build leadership capacity, and expand access to information on surface water, groundwater, and emerging contaminants—to support practical, community-driven solutions.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Meg Domroese

UW-Madison Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Ken Genskow, Professor and Extension Water Specialist
- Bret Shaw, Professor and Environmental Communications Specialist

UW-Green Bay Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Emily Tyner, Director of Freshwater Strategy

UW-Stevens Point Integrated Faculty and Staff

- Brian Sloss, Dean and Professor of Fisheries and Water Resources
- Cayla Cavey, Groundwater Education Specialist
- Somsubhra Chattopadhyay, Assistant Professor and Extension Water Specialist
- Abby Johnson, Data Science, Data Management and GIS Specialist



Wildlife Ecology and Management

Wisconsin Center for Wildlife

uwsp.edu/cnr/WCW

The Wisconsin Center for Wildlife engages students, landowners, professionals, and the public in sustainable wildlife ecology and management through research, education, and outreach efforts. The center's programming strives to increase public literacy around natural resources, improve networking and engagement within the natural resources community, increase knowledge and skills of wildlife students and professionals, increase conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat, and resolve human-wildlife conflicts.



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Jason Riddle

UW-Madison Integrated Faculty and Staff

- David Drake, Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist
naturalresources.extension.wisc.edu/uw-urban-canid-project/
- Jamie Nack, Extension Senior Wildlife Outreach Specialist

Institute Leadership



Tricia Gorby
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Travis Olson
Partnerships Manager
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Professional Services

Natural Resources Institute professional service teams provide marketing and communications, evaluation, and instructional design support to dozens of internal and external partners annually.

naturalresources.extension.wisc.edu/services

Evaluation

- Program planning and development
- Quantitative analysis (pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys)
- Qualitative analysis (individual and focus group interviews and field observations)
- Multimethod program evaluation



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Samuel Pratsch

Instructional Design

- Online and blended courses
- Peer-based instructional strategy
- Content analysis
- Video and script development
- Captioning
- Webinar delivery



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Janice Kepka

Marketing and Communications

- Branding and identity
- Graphic design
- Web development
- Editorial and accessibility guidance and review
- Marketing strategy



EXTENSION LEADERSHIP: Anne Nardi

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