

Chapter 5 – Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

This section is intended to provide an inventory of the agricultural, natural and cultural resources of the Town of Watertown. The elements which are analyzed in this section include climate, soils, farmland and topography, geology, mineral resources, vegetation types, watersheds and drainage, wetlands, floodplains, surface water features, groundwater, air quality, environmental corridors, threatened and endangered species, wildlife habitat, historic and archaeological sites, cultural resources and community design. Maps 5-1, 5-2 and 5-3 provide locations for such resources as farmland, environmental corridors, woodlands, wetlands and flood zones. These features present opportunities for conservation and development and need to be considered before making any decisions concerning future development within the town.

5.1 Climate

The climate of Jefferson County is considered "continental," which includes cold winters and fairly warm summers. The National Climatic Data Center reported that the average year-round temperature in Wisconsin is 43 degrees, while the average daily maximum temperature is 81 degrees and the average daily minimum temperature is 14 degrees. Precipitation is distributed rather evenly throughout the year, however is highest in summer months. Average annual snowfall in Jefferson County is 32 inches, while the average annual rainfall is about 30 inches. The growing season averages approximately 150 days and can be described as favorable for agricultural purposes.

5.2 Soils

Soil is composed of varying proportions of sand, gravel, silt, clay and organic material. The composition of a soil affects the specific properties of that soil. These properties must be evaluated prior to any development, as varying limitations exist for each soil.

A detailed study of all the soils in Jefferson County was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service. As part of that study, soils were identified in terms of generalized soil associations. The following presents a list and description of the general soil associations included within the Town of Watertown.

Houghton-Adrian Association

The soils in this association are mostly found in stream valleys and depressions in old glacial lake basins. Approximately 2,854 acres of the town consists of this soil association found mostly along Johnson Creek. Both Houghton and Adrian soils are very poorly drained and nearly level organic soils that are underlain by a sandy material. Minor soils in this association are Edwards, Palms, Sebewa soils and the Watseka variant.

This soil association presents severe limitations for development and the installation of private sewage systems given the wetness or high water table associated with these soils, exposure to flooding, low strength and potential for shrinking and swelling when the ground freezes and thaws. This soil association is good for crops when drained. Undrained areas are used for pasture or wetland wildlife habitat. The potential for the development of wetland habitat is good.

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Map 5-1 Farmland Preservation Areas

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Palms-Keowns-Milford Association

The soils in this association make up approximately 4,922 acres of the town and are found mostly along the Rock River corridor. These soils are very poorly drained, nearly level organic soils that have a loamy or clayey subsoil. These soils are underlain by silty, sandy, or clayey material.

Wetness is a severe limitation and the potential for residential or other intensive uses is poor. This soil association is cultivated in drained areas. Undrained areas are used for pasture or wetland wildlife habitat.

Wacousta-Lamartine-Theresa Association

The majority of the town, approximately 10,201 acres, consists of this soil association. This soil association is found mostly on till plains, drumlins, terraces in old lake basins and in low areas between drumlins. The Wacousta soils are on terraces in old lake basins and in low areas between drumlins. They are very poorly drained and poorly drained and nearly level. The Lamartine soils are on the side slopes on ground moraines and drumlins. They are somewhat poorly drained and gently sloping. Theresa soils are on till plains and drumlins. They are well drained, gently sloping, and sloping.

This soil association is suited for agricultural purposes. The soils that are not cultivated are mostly steep or wet and are wooded or unimproved pasture. The wet soils and the moderately steep or steep soils have poor potential for most urban uses while the well drained, gently sloping and sloping soils have good potential for urban uses

5.3 Farmland

According to the land use inventory conducted as part of Chapter 8, approximately 15,851 acres (65%) of the land within the Town of Watertown consists of agricultural uses. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Jefferson County is on the northern edge of the Nation's corn belt. The Town of Watertown and Jefferson County are mainly an area of dairy farms and considerable acreage of cash crops.

Historically, comprehensive planning efforts mapped prime agricultural soils within a town. Prime agricultural soils are described by the NRCS, are comprised of class I and II soils. Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class II soils have moderate limitations that either reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.

However, due to advancements in farming and land management techniques, once "marginal" agricultural lands (Class 3 or lower) can be managed successfully for crop production. In addition, Class I and II soil boundaries don't neatly follow parcel or property ownership lines which means lower class lands are a viable component to farmland preservation efforts. That said, parcel ownership plays a big factor on how land could potentially transition from one use to another. For example, farmers are more likely to sell to other farmers so farmer ownership patterns become a very important factor in the future farmland preservation efforts. Map 5-1 shows the areas identified as farmland preservation areas in the town based on the *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan*.

5.4 Topography

The topography or surface of the town can be described as generally level with some rolling hills. The surface was formed by pre-glacial and glacial erosion and is mostly comprised of glacial drift features, particularly drumlins which are oval hills. The highest point in the town is approximately 1002 feet above mean sea level and can be found in the northeast portion of the town. The lowest point is located in the south-central portion of the town, and is approximately 782 feet above mean sea level.

5.5 Geology

Bedrock Geology

According to the Groundwater Resources and Geology of Jefferson County, Wisconsin, prepared by the U.S. Department of the Interior Geological Survey in cooperation with the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, igneous and metamorphic rocks of the Precambrian age underlie all of Jefferson County. They crop out more than 800 feet above sea level in the northwest corner of the County and are less than 300 feet below sea level in the southwest corner of the County. The crystalline bedrock is very dense, hard, and generally impermeable.

Typically, bedrock has not presented any significant problems to development in the town. Examples of problems that may occur where bedrock is located at or near the surface include the potential for hindering excavation and considerably increasing the cost of construction. In addition, conventional onsite septic systems may not function properly where bedrock is near the surface, possibly resulting in wastewater passing through cracks or fissures.

Surface Geology

Watertown is located in an area that was glaciated during the Pleistocene epoch. Glaciation caused the northern portion of Jefferson County to be characterized by surface deposits including glacial till, outwash deposits by meltwater, lake-laid clay, silt, sand, and accumulations of peat and windblown silt.

5.6 Metallic and Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

The Town of Watertown has no active non-metallic mines but does have some inactive non-metallic mines which are scattered throughout its jurisdiction. Most of the sand and gravel mined within Jefferson County is used for concrete aggregate, fill material or road ballast.

According to the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance, mineral extraction and processing operations are conditional uses, and include mining, quarrying, borrow pits, crushing, washing, or other removal or processing of mineral resources. In addition, Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 135 requires that all Counties adopt and enforce a Non-metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance by June 1, 2001 that establishes performance standards for the reclamation of active and future non-metallic mining sites, but not abandoned sites. It is intended that NR 135 will contribute to environmental protection, stable non-eroding sites, productive end land use and the potential to enhance habitat and increase land values and tax revenues. Jefferson County adopted a Non-metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance on May 8, 2007.

5.7 Woodlands

Woodlands within the town are rather fragmented, which is common throughout southern Wisconsin communities given the extensive conversion of land by European settlers from southern forest to agriculture. The majority of woodlands within the town include a mix of broad-leafed deciduous and coniferous trees. The woodlands are mostly scattered, however, significant stands can be found along the Johnson Creek and Rock River corridors.

Woodlands have both economic and ecological value. Multiple benefits can be derived from this resource under good management practices. For example, woodlands provide an attractive rural setting by accentuating the beauty of the landscape. Woodlands also help to maintain the environmental quality of the area by contributing to clean air and water and provide habitat for a diversity of plant and animal life. Finally, woodlands contribute to opportunities for recreation such as hunting; trapping; mushroom, berry and nut collecting; wildlife viewing; and hiking.

5.8 Watersheds and Drainage

A watershed can be defined as an interconnected area of land draining from surrounding ridge tops to a common point such as a lake or stream confluence with a neighboring watershed. All lands and waterways can be found within one watershed or another. In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas and typically range in size from 100 to 300 square miles. River basins encompass several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin which range in size from 500 to over 5,000 square miles.

Wisconsin has redesigned its natural resource management approach around the concepts of ecoregions and watersheds. This shift in approach recognizes that working with the natural structure and function of resources, as opposed to strictly political or social boundaries, will provide more successful results. The Town of Watertown is located in the Upper Rock River Basin as designated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR).

There are four distinct watersheds contained within the Town of Watertown's boundaries: the Lower Crawfish River watershed in the northwest portion of the town, the Middle Rock River watershed, which is also the largest, located in the central portion, the Johnson Creek watershed located in the east-central portion, and the Sinissippi Lake watershed located in the eastern portion of the town. Exact watershed locations can be obtained from the WDNR's web site at the link below: <http://dnr.wi.gov/water/watershedsearch.aspx>

5.9 Wetlands

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season. Water saturation (hydrology) largely determines how the soil develops and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils.

Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, fens or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging

from pesticides to animal wastes. Wetlands can make lakes, rivers and streams cleaner, and drinking water safer. Wetlands also provide valuable habitat for fish, plants, and animals. In addition, some wetlands can also provide the replenishment of groundwater supplies. Groundwater discharge is common from wetlands and can be important in maintaining stream flows, especially during dry months.

Local, state and federal regulations place limitations on the development and use of wetlands and shorelands. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has inventory maps for each town that identifies wetlands two acres and larger and soils that are indicative of wetland conditions. The wetland inventory map should be consulted in conjunction with this document whenever the town reviews development proposals in order to identify wetlands and to ensure their protection from development. See Map 5-2.

5.10 Floodplains

The 100-year floodplains in the town are found along the Rock River, Johnson Creek, and other feeder streams and intermittent creeks. For planning and regulatory purposes, the floodplain is normally defined as those areas, excluding the stream channel, that are subject to inundation by the 100-year recurrence interval flood event. This event has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year. Because of this chance of flooding, development in the floodplain should be discouraged and the development of park and open space in these areas encouraged. The floodplain includes the floodway and flood fringe. The floodway is the portion of the floodplain that carries flood water or flood flows, while the flood fringe is the portion of the floodplain outside the floodway, which is covered by waters during a flood event. The flood fringe is generally associated with standing water rather than rapidly flowing water.

Wisconsin Statute 87.30 requires Counties, Cities and Villages to implement floodplain zoning. Jefferson County enforces a Flood Plain Ordinance that was adopted in 1978. This ordinance strictly regulates development within the floodplain. In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed flood hazard data. Under the authority of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, FEMA conducted studies to determine the location and extent of floodlands and the monetary damage risks related to the insurance of urban development in floodland areas. The 100-year floodplain areas for the unincorporated areas of Jefferson County have been delineated by FEMA. See Map 5-3.

Map 5-2 Environmental and Surface Water Features

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Map 5-3 Floodplain Zones 2015

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5.11 Surface Water Features

Lakes

There are no bodies of water classified as lakes within the Town of Watertown.

Rivers

Within the Town of Watertown, there are two named river and stream features in addition to the many tributaries, intermittent streams, wetlands and floodplains located throughout the town.

The Rock River flows northeast through the town to the City of Watertown and then flows southeast out of the City and back through the town and Jefferson County. The Rock River consists of several tributaries. According to Wisconsin Lakes, published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) in 1991, the Rock River has been classified as a warm water fishery that supports populations of catfish, walleye, northern pike, white bass, sauger, pan fish, crappie and perch. Fishing opportunities in the Rock River are described as good to excellent.

Johnson Creek is a prominent tributary to the Rock River that starts within the town and flows into the Rock River southeast of Kasten Lane in the Town of Watertown.

5.12 Groundwater Quality

The source of all groundwater is precipitation which percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone of an aquifer where it is then contained. Water in an aquifer travels from its source to a discharge point such as a well, wetland, spring or lake. During periods of increased precipitation or thaw, this vast resource is replenished with water moving by gravity through permeable soils which is called a water table system. In some instances, groundwater moves because of pressure created by a confuting layer of impervious rock which is called an artesian system. Groundwater is the primary source of potable water in Jefferson County and the Town of Watertown. Town residents are generally more dependent upon shallower and less-protected aquifers (underground soil layer where useable water is stored), than the City of Watertown or other urban centers which are served by public water supplies that typically access deep sandstone aquifers.

Most groundwater contamination is related to poorly sited land uses such as agricultural manure, petroleum and salt storage in areas of high groundwater tables or fractured bedrock situations. Contamination of groundwater reserves can also result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal (septic effluent), runoff from livestock yards and urban areas, improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers, excessive lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from mining operations into the aquifer. Runoff from leaking petroleum storage tanks and spills can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface. Once groundwater contamination has occurred, successful remediation can take years, or may never occur, depending upon the pollutant. Therefore, when considering specific land uses for an area, it is vital to consider the physical characteristics of the area and the relationships between the land and the proposed/actual use in order to ensure that groundwater contamination does not occur.

According to the Jefferson County Plan 2020 Environmental and Natural Resource Analysis, the Town of Watertown is underlain by sandstone and sand and gravel aquifers. Groundwater flow in the town is generally split with flow to the east or west towards the Rock River corridor.

5.13 Air Quality

In order to evaluate the quality of the air and to protect the public health, a series of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as established in section 109 of the Clean Air Act. According to the Wisconsin Air Quality Report, as prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the air pollutants affecting Wisconsin include sulfur dioxide, suspended particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, lead, sulfates and nitrates. Jefferson County is considered an attainment area, which is an area that meets the NAAQS defined in the Federal Clean Air Act. Within Jefferson County, various monitoring stations are located within the City of Jefferson and the Village of Johnson Creek.

As written in the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, Wisconsin's most serious air pollution problem is ground-level ozone in Southeastern Wisconsin. Washington, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee Counties are considered ozone non-attainment areas. As a result of this designation, these counties must comply with stricter air quality regulations for industry and vehicle emissions than other counties. This area of the state has specific requirements regarding mobile sources of pollution. These requirements include a vehicle inspection and maintenance program and stage two vapor recovery nozzles.

5.14 Environmental Corridors/Sensitive Areas

The Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan describes environmental corridors as continuous systems of open space that include sensitive areas located throughout the county where additional land preservation policies and development standards are applied. Environmental corridors are mapped using a number of objectively defined resource features as base data including surface water features, 100-year floodplains, wetlands, areas of steep slope 20% or greater, contiguous woodlands 10 acres or greater in size, and publicly owned recreational and conservancy lands. See Map 5-2.

Environmental corridors include most of the soils with severe developmental limitations, natural areas and primary wildlife habitats. When all of these features are mapped, a continuous corridor pattern usually results because these features often coincide or lie adjacent to each other. Environmental corridors provide scenic open space, wildlife habitat, and educational and recreational opportunities. Environmental corridors also perform important functions such as controlling, moderating and storing flood waters while providing nutrient and sediment filtration. Environmental corridors can also serve as buffers between land uses while improving the aesthetics of the community. Environmental corridors make up approximately 5,806 acres of the town's land area and should be utilized as a key resource feature to identify areas sensitive to development that should be promoted as green infrastructure or an interconnected network of open space.

5.15 Threatened and Endangered Species

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) lists species as "endangered" when the continued existence of that species as a viable component of the state's wild animals or wild plants is determined to be in jeopardy on the basis of scientific evidence. "Threatened" species are listed when it appears likely based on scientific evidence that the species may become endangered within the foreseeable future. The WDNR also lists species of "special concern" of which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected but not yet proved; the intent of this classification is to focus attention on certain species before becoming endangered or threatened.

Prior to European settlement, Jefferson County contained a variety of ecosystems with distinct plant communities that supported a variety of wildlife. However, since European settlement there has been a loss of some of these ecosystems due to the logging of forests, draining and filling of wetlands and the conversion of other natural lands to farmland. These losses include a variety of prairie and wetland plants, and a variety of animals including birds and fish, both large and small. The WDNR maintains records of areas identified by township in order to keep the location general. Exact locations are not identified in order to protect areas and discourage the intentional destruction of flora and fauna. Development proposals in these sections should be forwarded to the WDNR for comment.

5.16 Wildlife Habitat and State Natural Areas

Wildlife habitat can be simply defined as the presence of enough food, cover, and water to sustain a species. Jefferson County and the Town of Watertown landscape provide habitat for a variety of plants, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and fish. Examples of various landscapes that may be found within the town include dry prairie, emergent aquatic and floodplain forest. These areas are critical components of the State's biodiversity and may provide habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species.

The WDNR also identifies State Natural Areas which are defined as tracts of land in a natural or near natural state, which are managed to serve several purposes including scientific research, teaching of resource management, and preservation of rare native plants and ecological communities. No State Natural Areas have been identified within the Town of Watertown. However, one area within the town (*Watertown Maple Woods*) was identified within Jefferson County Park Site Feasibility Study for preservation and is described as, "A low broad drumlin and a mesic woods with an 80 percent composition of sugar maple. Other trees include red oak, black cherry, basswood, and shagbark hickory." The area is generally described as being located in Sections 25 and 26 of the town.

5.17 Historic and Cultural Resources

The National Register of Historic Places recognizes properties of local, state and national significance. Properties are listed in the National Register because of their associations with significant persons or events, because they contain important information about our history or prehistory, or because of their architectural or engineering significance. The National Register also lists important groupings of properties as historic districts. In addition, the National Park Service highlights properties that have significance to the nation as a whole by conferring on them the status of National Historic Landmark.

The Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places parallels the National Register. However, it is designed to enable state-level historic preservation protection and benefits. Most of the properties in Wisconsin listed in the National Register are also listed in the State Register.

According to the National and State Register, no historic places have been identified within the Town of Watertown. However, a number of places have been identified within the City of Watertown and are listed below:

- Brandt House (1874), 410 South Fourth Street
- Richard's Hill Residential Historic District (1854-4950), generally bounded by Western Avenue, Richards Avenue, Thomas Avenue, and Livsey Place with portions of Harvey Avenue and Charles Street
- Clyman Street Historical District (1855-1828), bounded by Western Avenue, Tenth Street, Station Street, and Fifth Street
- First Kindergarten (1856), 919 Charles Street
- Main Street Commercial Historic District (1848-1938)
- Beals and Torrey Shoe Company Building (1904), 100 N. Milwaukee Street Chicago & NW
- Fuermann, August. Jr., and Eliza House (1893), 500 S. Third Street
- Solliday, Albert F., House (1892-1893), 114 South Church Street
- South Washington Street Historical District (1860-1937), Odd numbered 201-309 South Church Street, and South Washington Street from Emmet to West Street
- Chicago and Northwest Railroad Passenger Station (1903), 725 W. Main Street
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1859), 413 S. Second Street
- St. Bernard's Church Complex (1873-1953) 100, 108 South Church Street, 111 South Montgomery Street
- Octagon House (1854), 919 Charles Street

While no historic places have been listed with the National and State Register, there are a number of historical buildings and places within the town. Examples include original farmhouses constructed using "Watertown Brick", original log structures and farm buildings, the Salem German Methodist Church, old schoolhouses, and the once thriving community of Aliceton. This community was located at the corner of what is now Aliceton Drive and CTH D, and included a grouping of a few homes, a church, a granary, general store and post office. Additional entries in the Wisconsin Architectural and History Inventory Collection can be found at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/>

The identification of existing historical and cultural resources is an important consideration in all town planning efforts. These areas help to define the community's physical look and character. These structures may also provide opportunities for future rural businesses.

5.18 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Goals and Objectives Goals

Community goals are broad statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community. Goals are value-based statements that are not necessarily measurable.

Objectives

Objectives are narrower than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and strategic planning. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources."

Goal ANC-1: Provide incentives and options to farmers and rural landowners to retain the town's contiguous areas of agricultural lands, natural areas and open spaces.

Supporting Objectives:

- ANC-1.1 Continue to utilize the farmland preservation program and other incentives which would provide farmers the ability to realize some of the value of their property while continuing to farm.
- ANC-1.2 Develop conservation design guidelines (clustering of home sites) and identify appropriate areas within the town.
- ANC-1.3 Support programs which lower the tax burden for lands under agricultural production or conserved as natural areas.

Goal ANC-2: Maintain the operational efficiency and productivity of Watertown's agricultural areas for current and future generations.

Supporting Objectives:

- ANC-2.1 Identify town lands where the primary intent is to preserve productive farmland, to allow for farming expansion, to maintain the efficiency and productivity of town farm operations, and to protect agricultural investment in land and improvements.
- ANC-2.2 Protect the continuity of farmland areas.
- ANC-2.3 Appropriately site whatever development occurs in agricultural areas in order to ensure that growth in rural areas is compatible with the continued use of the adjacent land for agricultural production.
- ANC-2.4 Inform current and prospective landowners about the types and timing of agricultural activities; importance of agriculture to the town economy; potential nuisances of living within an agricultural area; and actions that can be taken to minimize conflicts.

Goal ANC-3: Maintain, preserve and enhance the town's natural resources.**Supporting Objectives**

- ANC – 3.1 Manage growth to protect town open spaces, which, through their preservation, would: conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources; protect streams, water supply/quality, fish and wildlife habitat; promote conservation of soils, wetlands, beaches, and woodlands; enhance the value of adjoining public lands; maintain and improve public and private recreation opportunities; and/or preserve historic and cultural resources.
- ANC – 3.2 Direct growth away from environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes in order to protect the benefits and functions they provide and to save future public and private dollars spent on flood control, stormwater management, habitat restoration, erosion control, water
- ANC-3.3 Maintain a network of natural area and open space corridors and connections.
- ANC-3.4 Maintain and enhance plant and habitat diversity in Watertown.

Goal ANC-4: Preserve the significant historical and cultural lands, sites and structures that contribute to community identity and character.**Supporting Objectives:**

- ANC-4.1 Work cooperatively with Jefferson County, local historical societies and other appropriate organizations to identify, record, and protect lands, sites, rustic roads and structures that have historical or archaeological significance within the Town of Watertown.
- ANC-4.2 Promote the history of Watertown and the aspects that have helped to define it's culture and heritage.

5.19 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Policies

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to achieve fulfillment of the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words "will" or "shall" are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the *Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan*. In contrast, those policies that direct policy using the word "should" are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. An interconnected network of environmental features should be maintained throughout the town. New development should be directed to least productive farmland areas.
2. The town shall provide comment and review on all new permit requests relative to the Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance paying particular attention to potential impacts to surface and groundwater, the number and kinds of animals for which waste storage is to be provided, a description of how waste will be delivered to and removed from the facility, methods and timing of field applications, and impacts to residential areas.

3. The Rock River is an important natural resource that has been targeted for preservation by various organizations. The town should be open to strategies to protect land along the Rock River corridor. Examples of programs include purchase of development rights by a land trust, conservation easements, or purchase by the Department of Natural Resources via funds allocated within the Stewardship or Land Legacy program.
4. The town should work to preserve and promote the cultural resources and history of the town.
5. The town should consider accommodating alternative energy programs and facilities relative to wind, solar, hydro, fuel cell and other clean energy technologies only after a thorough evaluation of potential impacts to adjoining properties.
6. Work with Jefferson County to determine the most effective approach to review and permit items such as wind & solar power, mobile and radio broadband services and non-metallic mining operations.

5.20 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Programs

The following programs are available to the Town of Watertown with regard to agricultural, natural and cultural resources. The following list is not all inclusive and subject to change. For specific information a program representative should be contacted.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship NCO grant programs

Funds are available for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes, and for restoration of wildlife habitat. Nonprofit conservation organizations (NCOs) are eligible to apply. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, acquisition of rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

DNR Land Legacy Study

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources conducted a study of places that are important in meeting conservation and recreation needs for the next 50 years. This study identifies the general locations of these areas, describe the natural features, characteristics, and recreational opportunities that make them worthy of protection, and recommend priorities. Portions of the Rock River corridor, within the Town of Watertown have been identified. For further information on the study and to view a listing of places the staff have identified as being important in the future, visit the WDNR web-site.

Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program

Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and helps farmers and local governments preserve farmland, protect soil and water, and minimize land use conflicts. Through participation in the program:

- Counties develop farmland preservation plans
- Local governments can develop farmland preservation zoning districts
- Landowners and local governments together form Agricultural Enterprise Areas
- Landowners meet soil and water conservation standards to become eligible to claim an income tax credit.

This program's purpose is to help preserve farmland through local planning and zoning, promote soil and water conservation, and provide tax relief to participating farmers. Farmers qualify if their land is zoned or if they sign an agreement to use their land exclusively for agricultural purposes. The landowner must have produced gross farm profits of \$6,000 in the previous year or \$18,000 gross profits for the preceding 3 years. Public access is not required. The Town of Watertown has met the requirements of the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program and meets zoning district requirements enabling landowners to obtain farmland tax credits. Contact: the Jefferson County Land Conservation Department or DATCP.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The program's purpose is to reduce erosion, increase wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and increase forest land. Landowner sets aside cropland with annual rental payments based on amount bid. Practices include tree planting, grass cover, small wetland restoration, prairie and oak savannah restoration, and others. Eligibility varies by soil type and crop history. Land is accepted into program if bid qualifies. Continuous sign up open for buffers, waterways and environmental practices. Periodic sign ups announced throughout the year for other practices. Ten or 15 year contract if planting hardwood trees. Transferable with change in ownership. Public access not required. Contact: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency, or County Land Conservation Department.

Wisconsin Historical Society, Office of Preservation Planning (OPP)

The OPP can assist whether you need information concerning state or federal laws and regulations that may be applicable in your case, whether you need information on grassroots strategies for preserving and protecting historic properties, or whether you need information on how you may protect and preserve your own historic property.

Wisconsin's Historical Markers Program

For almost 50 years, Wisconsin's State Historical Markers program has been interpreting both important small incidents and monumental events that form the state's past. Placed on the very site where significant events occurred, markers evoke an immediacy of the past that no history book can provide. The Society's Division of Historic Preservation administers the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program. Applications are required for **all** official State of Wisconsin historical markers and plaques. Applications are available at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/pdfs/hp/HPR-HistoricalMarker-ApplicationForm.pdf>

Wisconsin Historical Preservation Tax Credits

One of **the** benefits of owning a historic property in Wisconsin is the ability to participate in federal and state income tax incentives programs for rehabilitation of historic properties. For more information of historical preservation tax credits see:

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:1214>

Or contact The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation for further information.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands. NRCS may enroll eligible land through permanent easements, 30-year easements, term easements, and 30-year contracts. These are described by NRCS as follows:

Permanent Easements – Permanent easements are conservation easements in perpetuity. NRCS pays 100 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 75 to 100 percent of the restoration costs.

30-year Easements – 30-year easements expire after 30 years. Under 30-year easements, NRCS pays 50 to 75 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.

Term Easements - Term easements are easements that are for the maximum duration allowed under applicable State laws. NRCS pays 50 to 75 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the term easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.

30-year Contracts – 30-year contracts are only available to enroll acreage owned by Indian tribes, and program payment rates are commensurate with 30-year easements.

Managed Forest Law (MFL)

The Managed Forest Law (MFL) is a landowner incentive program that encourages sustainable forestry on private woodland. In exchange for following sound forest management, the landowner pays reduced property taxes. It was enacted in 1985 and replaced the Woodland Tax Law and the Forest Crop Law. Lands may be enrolled for either 25 or 50-year periods, requiring a long-term commitment, also providing long-term protection from property tax escalations.

MFL is the only forest tax law that is open to enrollment. Land enrolled in the MFL program must be managed according to a plan agreed to by the landowner.

Practices identified in the plan must be carried out for the duration of the contract period. Mandatory management activities required by the law include cutting mature timber, thinning plantations and natural stands, pine release, planting, post-harvest treatments, and soil conservation practices. The MFL program is managed by the WDNR.

Private landowners in the town should be encouraged to participate in the Managed Forest Law program, or engage in some other form of formalized forest management practices, to ensure the

preservation and health of the town's woodlands which defines its "northwoods" character. There are numerous benefits which result from participation in forestry management programs, including:

- Protection against over cutting.
- Low regular property tax.
- Protection against annual property tax hikes.
- Technical assistance for private forest lands.
- Predictable property tax.
- Long-term forestry investment.
- Preserves and manages wildlife habitat.
- Preserves "Northwoods" character.

It must be noted that Wisconsin Governor, Scott Walker has recently signed 2015 Wisconsin Act 358 into law. This new law makes numerous changes to the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and some changes to the Forest Crop Law (FCL). Please contact your local DNR Forester for more information on the changes to MFL and FCL.