



NEWS RELEASE- for immediate publication

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Photos – see attachments & sample captions at end of release

More photos available upon request

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Wisconsin Women in Conservation Week July 12-18 Highlights Contributions of Women Farmers and Landowners along with Conservation Professionals and Educators

Blanchardville, WI - Citing the growing influence of women owning and managing land in Wisconsin, as well as the historic contributions of women conservation professionals and educators, Governor Tony Evers has proclaimed July 12-18 Wisconsin Women in Conservation Week. A coalition of agriculture and conservation organizations plans to commemorate the week with a Conservation Educators Happy Hour and by announcing a series of summer conservation education field days and in-person workshops.

The proclamation reads, in part:

“Whereas; women landowners in Wisconsin understand the importance of collaborative conservation and are champions of conservation practices such as the utilization of cover crops and pollinator habitat, the protection of native species, and regenerative agriculture; and

Whereas; our state offers many resources and technical support for women landowners and landowners of all backgrounds, and especially those who are just beginning their conservation journey; and

Whereas; this week the state of Wisconsin joins women landowners and farmers across our state in celebrating the essential contributions they make to conservation and to the prosperity of our agricultural industry as a whole.”

On July 14, conservation educators and professionals who work with women landowners and farmers are invited to attend a Happy Hour celebration and networking event from 5 to 7pm at Brix Cider in Mount Horeb. State Conservationist Angela Biggs will deliver remarks. Pat Leavenworth, Wisconsin's first female state conservationist, who served from 1994-2012, will also speak. The event will be outside, weather permitting, and follow current [CDC Covid-19 guidelines](#). Event is free but registration is required at [WiWiC.org/upcoming-events](#).

This event is being hosted by Wisconsin Women in Conservation (WiWiC), a state-wide collaborative effort led by the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute in partnership with Wisconsin Farmers Union, Renewing the Countryside, E Resources Group and the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) with support from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). WiWiC hopes to use the event to kick off a first-ever state-wide Advisory Committee on Women in Conservation that will convene over a three-year period to share best practices and support each other's work. Another goal is showcasing the work of women in conservation in the media.

Wisconsin Women in Conservation Educators Happy Hour

Wednesday, July 14, 5-7pm

Brix Cider, 119 S. 2nd Street, Mount Horeb

RSVP at [WiWiC.org/upcoming-events](#)

"Women landowners are a growing demographic. The 2017 Census recorded 38,509 female producers in Wisconsin, showing that women make up 35 percent of all producers in the state, which is slightly higher than the national average of 30 percent. That means women have more influence than ever over the future of land and water in Wisconsin, and we need to be intentional about serving them with conservation education and incentive programs," said Kriss Marion, WiWiC communications specialist. "WiWiC is testing a variety of methods and tools, and using survey instruments to determine what works best."

This unique three-year initiative is collaboratively engaging women landowners across the state through workshops, field days, farm tours, mentorships, email resource communications and other learning opportunities. Zoom workshops began in March and are scheduled through August. A team of Regional Coordinators leads cohorts of women landowners in four regions to network and share resources as well as

connecting them to regional NRCS agency staff and programs. Women will also have the opportunity to connect with Conservation Coaches, who are experienced women landowners with particular expertise in different aspects of conservation.

“Through this new partnership venture, we are very excited to extend our resources and further connect and support women landowners throughout Wisconsin,” explains Angela Biggs, NRCS Wisconsin State Conservationist. “Our peer-based learning circle models are successfully bringing women together in a space that promotes collaborative learning, relationship building and support. Through this effort, we aim to help women in their unique conservation goals, while strengthening the long-term environmental health of Wisconsin.”

The group launched a monthly e-newsletter this week and announced an in-person Summer Field Day series and Fall Conservation Workshop series.

WiWiC Summer Field Days

Tues, Aug 3, 4-6PM, Full Circle Community Farm, Seymour, WI

Fri, Aug 6, 9AM-12PM, Turtle Creek Gardens, Delavan, WI

Sat, Aug 14, 1-5PM, Prairie Walk in Pepin, WI

Tues, Sep 28, 3-7PM, Holm Girls' Dairy, Elk Mound, WI

WiWiC Fall Conservation Workshops: Establish a Conservation Plan

Sat, Aug 28, 2-4PM, Beaver Creek Reserve, Fall Creek, WI

Thurs, Oct 07, 1-3:00 PM, Schmeckle Reserve, Stevens Point, WI

Thurs, Oct 14, 4-6:00 PM, Farm Table Foundation, Amery, WI

To register for upcoming events and sign up for the statewide newsletter, visit www.WiWiC.org. Wisconsin Women in Conservation is also on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest.

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Sample Captions:

“Serving women in agriculture is so important for sustaining healthy farm families, healthy food, conserving our soil, protecting our critical water resources and having a solid local community,” said Pat Leavenworth, former head of NRCS from 1994 to 2021. Leavenworth was the first woman State Conservationist in Wisconsin. “I congratulate Wisconsin Women in Conservation for all their wonderful work thus far in their mission! And hats off to our current NRCS State Conservationist, Angela Biggs, for her work in supporting these efforts.” (caption for Pat Leavenworth, in flowered vest)







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