

DANE COUNTY CONSERVATION FUND GRANT AWARD TO
GROUNDSWELL CONSERVANCY (BLACK EARTH VALLEY FARMS, LLC)

Groundswell Conservancy has applied to the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program for financial assistance to purchase an Agricultural Land Easement on approximately 111 acres in the Town of Berry owned by Black Earth Valley Farms, LLC. The land is bordered by STH 14 and CTH KP and lies within the Black Earth Creek Natural Resource Area. Black Earth Creek runs along the north side of the property and is under a streambank easement held by Wisconsin DNR. There are two conservation easements co-held by Groundswell and the county bordering the west and south sides and DNR's Black Earth Creek Fishery lands border the property on the east and west sides.

The easement would fill in a gap between existing publicly-owned lands, limit development and impervious surface along the creek and provide a needed link for the Black Earth Creek Trail. Under the easement, the property will continue to be used for agricultural purposes and any development would be restricted.

The estimated project costs for the acquisition total \$503,866. The Dane County Park Commission recommends up to \$248,000 in county matching funds. A portion of the property is enrolled in the County's Continuous Cover Program and that cost-share payment has been deducted from the grant funds.

Additional grant funds from the Natural Resource Conservation Service Agricultural Conservation Easement Program will complete the purchase. County grant funds will be from the Black Earth Connector Corridor Fund and the term of the debt issued to support this expenditure will be 20 years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a grant of \$248,000 to Groundswell Conservancy is approved by the Dane County Board and the Dane County Executive and that the County will pay up to the grant amount based on actual project expenses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Dane County Clerk and Dane County Executive are authorized to execute documents necessary to effectuate the grant award, which may include grant agreements, management agreements, and the acceptance of an easement that will vest in Dane County according to Wisc. Stats. 27.05(3), and that the land interests be managed under the jurisdiction of the Dane County Park Commission.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Dane County Land & Water Resources Director and Real Estate Coordinator, are authorized to approve closing and reimbursement documentation for grant projects and the transfer of an easement to Dane County and the Controller is authorized to issue checks necessary to effectuate the transactions authorized through the grant award.