



Budget Blueprint: Clean Drinking Water and Resilient Farms by 2030

To address the water quality challenges many Wisconsin families face, we must commit to long-term solutions and bold action. Over the next decade, we need to dedicate significant financial investments to provide clean drinking water for affected residents, and appropriate incentives for farmers to protect water quality.

ENSURING CLEAN DRINKING WATER

Well contamination: Offer every family that has a nitrate-contaminated well the opportunity to access funds for well replacement or whole home filtration. Investment: \$15 million per year for 10 years.

Well testing: Provide grants for county-led programs or direct state assistance that prioritizes testing for low-income households and high-risk areas. Investment: \$6.5 million per year ongoing.

SUPPORTING CURRENT CONSERVATION EFFORTS AND FOSTERING INNOVATION

County conservation staff: Increase professional staff capacity to support private landowner management goals, implement conservation standards and improve water quality. Investment: \$17.9 million per year ongoing.

Farmland preservation: Support and increase Farmland Preservation Program tax credits as laid out in an existing bipartisan bill. Investment: \$21.4 million per year ongoing.

Nitrate pollution prevention: Expand on the concept of an already proposed on-farm nitrogen optimization pilot program to address nitrate contamination with increased funding and the addition of a pay-for-performance program. Investment: \$10 million per year ongoing.

Investing in conservation science: Create a hydrogeologist position at the University of Wisconsin Extension focused on developing groundwater mapping resources as proposed in an earlier bill, and have the state continue depth-to-bedrock mapping in southwestern Wisconsin similar to that conducted in the northeastern part of the state. Investment: \$550,000 over the biennium.

Increasing cover crops: Create a crop insurance premium rebate program to incentivize planting cover crops. Similar programs in other states have fully subscribed within days of their launch. Investment: \$500,000 per year ongoing.

Addressing climate change: Take a variety of opportunities to address climate change in agriculture.

- Create a pilot program to study the feasibility of a carbon market covering the state, including providing grants to farmers and farmer-led groups that participate. Investment: \$370,000 over the biennium.
- Continue to support farmer-led watershed conservation groups and expand the focus to carbon sequestration in farm practices, and greenhouse gas mitigation. Investment: \$2 million over the biennium.
- Avoid conversion of natural working lands by expanding the Farmland Preservation Program and creating a state/federal working group to investigate addition of grasslands to use value assessment.
- Prioritize managed grazing livestock production systems by creating a statewide grazing education grant program and assist farmers who incorporate regenerative agricultural practices. Investment: \$640,000 over the biennium.