

AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF A CONSERVATION EASEMENT – WAGNER

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) has negotiated the purchase of a Conservation Easement in the Town of Springfield from Duane Wagner. The easement will encumber approximately 211 acres of agricultural land including approximately 200 acres of prime cropland and a 10.3 acre production site. This easement will ensure that the land remains in agriculture use in the future. The easement requires that the existing manure storage facilities be properly closed, livestock be removed from the property and limits the number of livestock allowed on the property in the future.

The property is located within the Yahara River Watershed and contains an intermittent stream. The easement requires the owner to have the operator of the cropland submit a nutrient management plan in accordance with applicable technical standards annually to the Land Conservation Division (LCD) as well as comply with the agricultural performance standards and prohibitions identified in county ordinance and ch. NR 151, Wisconsin Administrative Code. Farming in accordance with these requirements paired with the limitation of livestock will reduce sediment and nutrient runoff and help improve water quality in the Yahara River Watershed.

This easement purchase aligns with the goals of the current *Dane County Land and Water Resources Management Plan* which includes maintaining agricultural lands for long- term production, protecting and improving the quality of groundwater and surface water and also partnering with citizens in soil and water protection initiatives. The property is identified in an agricultural preservation area in the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan - Farmland Preservation Plan*. The preservation of tracts of agricultural lands is also recommended in the Town of Springfield Comprehensive Plan and included in the *2018-2023 Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan*.

The purchase price of the easement is \$956,000. Funds for the project are available in the Yahara CLEAN (Capital Lakes Environmental Assessment & Needs) account. The debt issued to support this expenditure will have a term of 20 years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors and County Executive hereby authorize the purchase of a conservation easement from Duane J. Wagner and that the land rights be managed under the jurisdiction of the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dane County Clerk and County Executive are hereby authorized to execute the described easement and related documents on behalf of Dane County; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Land & Water Resources Director or Real Estate Coordinator are authorized to administer the closing and the transfer of the easement interests to Dane County and the Controller is authorized to issue checks necessary to effectuate the transaction.