



# Badger Report

NOVEMBER 2012

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## Southwest Badger RC&D partners with Green Lands, Blue Waters Consortium and the Shade Fund

In September, Southwest Badger joined the Green Lands, Blue Waters (GLBW) Consortium. The mission of GLBW is to support the development of and transition to a new generation of agricultural systems that integrate more perennial plants and other forms of continuous living cover in the agricultural landscape. This includes agricultural systems based on perennial plants such as grasses, legumes, shrubs, and trees, as well as annual plants grown as cover crops in combination with annual row crops. The GLBW Consortium brings together scientists, policy experts, farmers, and community organizers from the Upper Midwest to the Gulf of Mexico, centered on the Mississippi River Basin. As a consortium member, Southwest Badger will work to promote GLBW goals in southwest Wisconsin through both existing and new projects. Angie Wright presented on continuous

living cover efforts in Southwest Wisconsin at the GLBW Partnership Conference in Ames, Iowa in mid-October. For more information on GLBW visit their website at [www.greenlandsbluewaters.org/index.html](http://www.greenlandsbluewaters.org/index.html).

Also in September, Southwest Badger signed a field partnership agreement with the ShadeFund. The ShadeFund is a joint project of The Conservation Fund and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities. The ShadeFund provides small loans to green entrepreneurs who are good stewards of farmland and forestland. As a field partner, Southwest Badger will promote the ShadeFund, as well as identify and encourage qualified small businesses to apply for ShadeFund loans. For more information about the ShadeFund visit their website at [www.shadefund.org](http://www.shadefund.org) or contact Southwest Badger RC&D.

## *Southwest Badger RC&D Annual Meeting*

**Date:** December 14, 2012

**Time:** Meeting: 9:30 am to noon

Lunch - noon to 1 pm

Brewery Tour - 1 pm

**Location:** Potosi Brewery  
209 S Main Street,  
Potosi, WI

**Menu:** Wisconsin Fish Fry with coleslaw and fries, or Beef tips over pasta, with vegetable, both meals include roll, pie and coffee or tea. Vegetarian option available upon request.

Price including Tax, Tip, Tour, and beer or rootbeer is \$18.00

Please make checks payable to Southwest Badger RC&D Council.

**RSVP by November 30th.**

Call (608) 348-7110 or email [swbadger@swbadger.org](mailto:swbadger@swbadger.org)

*We look forward to seeing you there!*

## Forest Stewardship

**Patrick Dayton, Forester/Project Coordinator**

The autumn winds have blown in and the leaves on the trees are turning colors; but we can't yet put this year in the annals since there is a lot of work left to accomplish.

The profitability of forest management is often called into question. Landowners often ask whether it is worth it to plant trees that will take more than 80 years to reach maturity. The general public does not realize the complete economic impact of forestry in our local communities. When I talk with landowners about the monetary benefits of timber harvesting, not only for the landowner but through the whole production process, the overall fiscal picture of forestry stands out better than many resource uses. A quick look at the process proves the point. Harvesting timber can involve a landowner, forester, logger, several truckers, sawyer, graders, kiln operator, secondary manufacturer, retailer, contractor, and final user all receiving some benefit from trees. Wow! Harvesting timber produces a lot of economic activity and trees are a renewable resource. Not every person mentioned above is always a part of the process, but many of those people in the chain have professional positions that pay a living wage.

One of the issues forestry faces is that the landowners don't always understand the broader economic implications of management. In most other land uses the economics of management are at the forefront of concerns. Agriculture and tourism are taken very seriously and are often touted as economic engines of rural communities. Forestry should also be a part of this conversation given the sustainability and conservation benefits of forestry (clean air, clean water, water retention, animal habitat). Forest landowners, foresters, and the forest industry need to see and promote the true economics of forestry and never shy away from an honest discussion about the benefits to all of society.

## Southwest Wisconsin Grazing Initiative

**Dennis Rooney, Grazing Specialist**

This quarter I worked on twelve EQIP (Environment Quality Incentive Program) projects covering 1,079 acres and seven Grazing Plans covering 785 acres. I attended six pasture walks and two conferences. I also made seven new contacts and consulted with 20 others concerning their grazing needs.

The lack of rain this summer put a heavy strain on our pastures and hay crops, not to mention the animals and humans. After talking with producers, it was discovered that those who rotated their pastures and didn't graze them short had much faster regrowth than those who grazed short and didn't rotate. I would also like to mention how much better alfalfa fared during the drought due to its deeper roots. Based on this observation, we are recommending adding 3 to 5 pounds of alfalfa seed to your pasture mix. Clovers also fared better. An advantage of planting both alfalfa and clover is that they add nitrogen to the soil, which in turn produces more grass.

Rain early in the last quarter will promote late grass growth. Tall fescue, Orchardgrass and Canarygrass are examples of high yielding grasses that are suitable for fall and winter grazing; however, they are best used by the middle of December because of declining quality and possible heavy snow cover. As with all late-growth forage, the nutritional value decreases as temperatures get colder, so please be aware of the nutritional requirements of the animals you are grazing.

## Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area

**Katie Abbott, Project Coordinator**

The big news in the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area is that project coordinator, Katie Abbott, has moved on to a new position with the Driftless Area Land Conservancy. Southwest Badger would like to thank Katie for her efforts over the past six years, her contributions to the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area have been invaluable. While Katie will be missed here at Southwest Badger, we wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Before her departure Katie was the lead organizer for the Southwest Wisconsin Prairie Festival, held on September 7 and 8, 2012. The Prairie Festival kicked off on Friday evening with a local food and wine tasting and screening of "America's Lost Landscape: The Tallgrass Prairie", attended by about 30 people. The Festival continued on Saturday with a series of activities, including guided prairie walks; maps for self-guided tours; a presentation (in period costume) about the original 1800's land surveys and what they found at the Festival location; lectures on: Introduction to Prairie, Badgers, Grassland Birds, Invasive Plants, and Prairie Gardening; music and barn dance; keynote speaker Jerry Apps speaking about "People and Prairie"; photography prairie walk; and creative visual arts. There were also many children's activities, including storytime, furs and skulls on display, games, crafts, face painting, and kid's prairie walks/insect netting. More than 130 people attended the Prairie Festival on Saturday.

## Driftless Forest Network/ My Wisconsin Woods

**Zak Neitzel, Forester**

The last few months have been quite busy and I have gotten to see a lot of our beautiful region. The spring campaign is just about wrapped up. So far I have met with somewhere around 64 landowners for a total of just over 3,000 acres. Follow up has begun with these landowners, with some mixed but overall encouraging results. The fall campaign is starting to ramp up, with many landowners already mailing in requests for forester visits. This new campaign is larger in area, extending from Grant County in the south all the way to Buffalo County in the north. The lull between the campaigns has also allowed me some time to fulfill my role as a circuit rider forester, assisting the local DNR foresters. This has mainly consisted of marking timber stand improvement in Richland and La Crosse counties, but has also included an assortment of other projects such as timber sale administration and plantation checks. I also spent a half day with Southwest Badger's own Patrick Dayton looking at biomass plantings within the Kickapoo Reserve. In addition, I helped teach tree identification to 6th graders at the Ash Creek Community Forest, attended more training events, the Tri-State Forester Meeting at Wyalusing State Park, and another bird field day.

The next few months are likely to be pretty wild between the fall mailing campaign, holidays, and hunting seasons. I am looking forward to the cooler weather and another 3,000 acres. I will also likely be assisting UW-Extension with the Learn About Your Land classes this winter.

## From the Executive Director

Dear Partners and Friends,

First, I would like to invite all of you to our annual meeting on December 14th at the Potosi Brewery. The meeting itself will run from 9:30 to noon with lunch and a brewery tour following. We will be discussing our work plan for 2013 and hearing from the UW-Madison Urban and Regional Planning students working on the Energy Opportunity Plan. See the announcement on the front page for additional information about the meeting and how to RSVP.

Second, I would like to thank everyone who completed our Needs Assessment survey. More than 100 of you, from across the region took the time to fill out the survey and help us identify important issues in the region. The Council will use the survey results in their long-range planning efforts over the next year. Thank you again for helping us make southwest Wisconsin a better place to live, work, and play.

Lastly, I would like to let you know that I will be resigning from my position as Executive Director of Southwest Badger RC&D Council. This was not an easy decision for me to make, but I have decided to pursue other endeavors. I have greatly enjoyed working with Southwest Badger for the past ten years. I would like to thank all of you - Council, staff, and partners - for all your support over the years. I plan to stay on with the Council through early January or February to help with a transition to a new Executive Director and to ensure minimal impact to projects and operations.

Wishing You All the Best,



## Southwest Wisconsin Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Initiative

**Don Barrette, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator**

Fall is here and winter is coming, it is time to put away your tools and begin preparing. It is also a time for us to reflect back on the summer and look at the many things we have been able to accomplish. As the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) coordinator for the region, I am pleased that partnerships were formed that enhanced our ability to make a difference in the region.

Unfortunately it is very hard in this small space to give the praise needed and deserved to everyone who assisted in the many summer AIS projects with Southwest Badger and its partners. But I will try when I say thank you to all of you who were involved in the summer of 2012 and thank you for making my job that much easier. It is because of you that the many AIS activities were a success. Your assistance allowed us to complete a rapid response grant, start Japanese Knotweed and Japanese Hops removal and management projects, install AIS signs in most of the nine counties we serve, inspect a number of boats during Clean Boats Clean Waters (CLBW) activities, bring AIS issues and awareness to

the many citizens in the region, sample for AIS at more than sixty locations, create a new AIS distribution database, and increase the overall awareness within Driftless Area communities. It is strong involvement with our partners that make these success stories possible, so I thank you for your time and efforts. I also look forward to another year of rewarding AIS work.

As you know invasive species know no bounds and never sleep. We need to continue to be vigilant in our approach and methods. Unfortunately 2012 brought us a host of new discoveries. Many of these new AIS discoveries were in the Mississippi River but others were more inland. Late in the month of July, Flowering Rush, Water Lettuce, Water Hyacinth, and Parrot Feather were discovered near Cassville, Wis. All of these organisms are invasive to Wisconsin and are transported through humans and their activities. We need to keep the pressure on when it comes to AIS by continuing to practice good habits when cleaning and disinfecting of our motor vehicles, boats, recreational equipment, hunting equipment

## Upcoming Events

**December 1, 2012 - 9 am - 1 pm**  
Grazing As a Land Use Option - Introduction to Grazing workshop  
Dodgeville, WI

*For information contact Southwest Badger.*

**December 14, 2012 - 9:30 am - noon**  
Southwest Badger Annual Meeting  
Potosi Brewery, Potosi, WI

*Lunch will be available for \$18 (includes beer or rootbeer, tax, tour and gratuity). Please call 608.348.7110 or email [subadger@swbadger.org](mailto:subadger@swbadger.org) by December 5th to register for lunch.*

**March 1, 2013 - 10 am - noon**  
Southwest Badger Quarterly Meeting  
Location: TBA

and other articles used in our enjoyment of the outdoors. Good habits can reduce and prevent AIS dispersal and decrease their ability to become established. Good habits are also a responsible way to ensure that future generations can enjoy the same natural resources. Again thank you for all of your assistance and keep up the good work.

*Help Us  
Conserve Resources  
Sign Up for our  
E-Newsletter Now!*

Go to

<http://www.swbadger.org/>

Enter your email address  
in the sign up box at the bottom of  
the page.



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### *Council Members*

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	John Schindler (Treasurer)
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	Eugene Hausner (Secretary)
Vernon	Herb Cornell
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