

Calumet County Ag Stewardship Alliance – 2023 Conservation Cooperator

Back in 2019 a small group of farmers came together to start discussion on how they could help promote conservation in our primarily agricultural community in Calumet County. Due to what they already knew about groundwater and surface water concerns they wanted to know what they could do to help.



From there the group became formalized and adopted a set of by-laws and elected a five-member Board of Directors. But the work was just getting started. A newer program offered by the state Department of Ag, Trade and Consumer protection allowed producer led watershed protection groups to apply for funding to create programs for research and promotion of conservation programs. They started out small with applying for and receiving grant funds for the development of

a well testing program and promoting a conservation field day with multiple partners.

The group has now grown to include 23 members with 18 farm members. Membership in the group is responsible for farming almost 24,000 acres of cropland and managing about 23,800 livestock and now has a full board of directors with 9 elected at their annual meeting in January.

The group has expanded its reach and is now providing cost-share for cover crops and no-till utilizing funds from the state as well as partnering with The Nature Conservancy in providing funding to willing farmers.

The group has continued partnership with the Calumet County Land & Water Conservation Department co-hosting a field day in 2022 along with the Between the Lakes Demo Farm Network which there were around 100 attendees. They have expanded partnerships and membership is now working with the Land & Water Conservation Department and UW Discovery Farms on a nitrogen leaching study which will get started this summer.

Calumet County Land & Water Conservation appreciates the work that the group has done and will continue to do and appreciates the ongoing partnership.

On behalf of the Calumet County Land & Water Conservation Committee I present the 2023 Conservation Cooperator Award to The Calumet County Agricultural Stewardship Alliance and we have John Schwarz and Paul Meyer.