



# STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter 2022

[crawfordstewardship.org](http://crawfordstewardship.org)

## CSP's Karst Campaign

From studies, maps, and well tests to literature, art and theater!

*By Forest Jahnke*

***We do it all here! Our karst campaign has tunnels of learning for all audiences, and our team of professors, scientists, GIS experts, and artists are here to shepherd folks down into the depths of understanding.***

We have some good news on the Driftless Area Water Study front: namely, that there will be another round of well tests offered in Crawford and Vernon and possibly Richland Counties in November! We are glad to see continued investment in this project, and are happy to help facilitate another round of this important testing.

While there is nothing confirmed yet, and we still need to get more county level buy-in, we are working behind the scenes with the WI Geological and Natural History Survey to initiate a study to improve the bedrock mapping and groundwater susceptibility data for this area.



*Raccoon meets Fox, who shows her the underground world in our karst kids book!*

We are also looking for a grad student who is interested in helping us bring the data we created through our community science events (well construction report analysis and sinkhole mapping) to completion and publication in a scientific journal.

We continue to improve the interactive karst viewer on our website, which will soon include all wellhead placements in Crawford County, with well construction reports linked for review.

As we await new LiDAR data (high detail elevation maps), bedrock maps from this century (the ones used now are from 1876!), and surficial deposit (read: soils, clays, etc. overlying the bedrock) studies to become available, we will keep improving this resource. Check it out at: [karstology.crawfordstewardship.org](http://karstology.crawfordstewardship.org)

Our kARsT (Karst + ART) Educational campaign continues on several fronts, with our lovely Driftless Slope Maps posters hitting walls across the region and record attendance at this year's Karst Exploration event! We have a manuscript in-hand, and Kathie Wheeler is crafting the illustrations for our karst kids book, as we search out publishing options. We are also working on getting our popular "Underground World" karst shadow puppet show back in front of our youngest learners this year.

So, whether you want to educate your elected officials on groundwater susceptibility and what that means for land use, build your children's understanding of some bedrock realities, or are just a map nerd like us, we've got something for you!



*Gathered around a sinkhole, we learn from the best: Professor Emeritus Kelvin Rodolfo, and nature herself!*



## Looking for Equilibrium...

Water Quality Monitoring report

*By Omaru Heras*

When someone asks what the most valuable things in life are, the main responses tend to be family, friends, health, and love. Now, a deeper question: What makes possible and sustains such things? We believe that clean water, air, and living soil, as well as biodiversity are in fact essential for these values to be a reality. Wouldn't everything fall apart without those fundamental elements and their equilibrium?

This begs a final question: What is the best way for us to take care of these bases of life? ...

# Thank you for helping us do what we do!

Even this impressive list of volunteers and collaborators does not account for hundreds of people and actions taken with us that we've not kept careful track of, but we are ever-grateful for all who have attended township and county meetings and hearings, written letters to the editor, spoken with neighbors about these issues, or took any of a number of actions on our collective behalf.

Maximilian Abraham  
Glory Adams  
Barb Bangert  
Alison Barazani  
Sarah & Dan Barron  
Harriet Behar  
Denise Benoit  
Justus Benson  
Sarah Bransky  
Ellen Brooks  
Kathy Byrne  
Paul Byrne  
Connie Champnoise  
Anne Coleman  
Deb Conlon  
Adam Cox  
Diane Craig  
Kathy Crittenden  
Carol Dagnon  
Debbie Dudek  
Dave Edinger  
Edie Ehlert  
Ken Freedman  
Nyah Forkash  
Adrienne Fox  
Kent Gallaway  
Sam Goodwin  
Dave Hackett  
Greg Hall  
Jude Hartwick  
Fred Hausler  
Tony Hendricks  
Omaru Heras Ornelas  
Debbie & Bill Hiller  
Mary Holmgren  
Gina & Bill Holtz

Forest Jahnke  
Rikardo Jahnke  
Lamar Janes  
Judith Jellies  
Beth Jensen  
Maggie Jones  
Kathy and Jim Kachel  
Carol Anne Kemen  
Cindy Kohles  
Jack Knight  
Khadijah Lacina  
Peg LaMartina  
Tim Lawhern  
Mike Lind  
Ladislav Majer  
Eli Mandel  
Elizabeth Moffett  
Ana Molina  
Jane Mussey  
Steve Oberle  
Ilana Pestcoe  
Gary Porter  
Eric Pouer  
Marinella Pro  
Cory Redfield  
Chrisse Reynolds  
Roger Reynolds  
Jeff & Susan Robinson  
Kelvin Rodolfo  
Arleena Roe  
John & Audrey Rosenheim  
Nancy Lou Rosenheim  
Jeanne Ruchti  
Florence Sandok  
Pam Saunders  
Lynda Schaller

Jim Scheckel  
Carl Schlecht  
Eli Schmidt  
Ella Scott-Kehoe  
Emile, Camile, & Jared Smith  
Doug Spany  
Adam Stanton  
Ken Stark  
Arnie Steele  
Michael Steinmetz  
Randy Swiggum  
Sara Tedeschi  
Ric Thill  
Rosa Thill  
Kat Tigerman  
Peggy Timmerman  
Bob Van Hoesen  
Ellen Voss  
Matt Wagner  
Chrisse & Drew Watson  
Julie Wedeberg  
Connie Weedman  
Scarlet Welander  
Cindy Wiar  
Janet Widder  
M'Lou Wilkie  
Ben Wilson  
Meg Wise  
Elise Zelechowski

## PROJECT COLLABORATORS

Citizen Lake Monitoring Network  
Friends of the Lower Wisconsin  
Legion GIS  
Leather Laboratories  
Midwest Environmental Advocates  
Sustain Rural Wisconsin Network  
Valley Stewardship Network  
Wisconsin Farmers Union, Vernon/Crawford County Chapter  
Wisconsin Farmers Union, Sterling-Crawford Local Chapter  
Citizen Action of WI, Driftless Organizing Cooperative  
UW-Extension  
Viroqua Climate Action  
Viterbo University  
Youth Initiative High School  
Thoreau College  
Wisconsin Conservation Voters  
Swamp Project People  
Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey

## BANDS

Murder Kween  
Barry & Sherri  
Freaks of Nature

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Edie Ehlert  
**Vice President:** Ellen Brooks  
**Treasurer:** Lamar Janes  
**Secretary:** Harriet Behar  
**Board Member:** Eli Schmidt  
**Board Member:** Roger Reynolds

## STAFF

**Program Coordinator:** Forest Jahnke  
**Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator:** Omaru Heras  
**Community Engagement Coordinator:** Elizabeth Moffett  
**Financial Coordinator:** Lamar Janes  
**Consulting Agroecologist:** Steve Oberle  
**GIS/Mapping Contractor:** Adam Cox

# Roth Feeder Pig II CAFO approved to expand

But this is only the beginning...

By Forest Jahnke

We have been honored to work with experts, concerned citizens, and the neighborhood in the area of the proposed Roth Feeder Pig II Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) to slow and put limits on this insane permit to grow Roth Feeder Pig into the largest hog CAFO in the state in one of the most sensitive and beautiful spots one can imagine. We have collectively done everything one is supposed to do in these cases.

We spurred and participated in CAFO Moratoriums and study committees in Marietta Township, and then in Crawford County. We deeply informed the record for the DNR permits. We provided stacks of public input in opposition to these permits at every level and every opportunity.

On July 12th, as over sixty people attended the public comment period for the county permits, only AV Roth, owner operator of Roth Feeder Pig spoke in favor of this proposal. There were stories from neighbors of the existing Roth Feeder Pig operation being woken at night by the intense odor. Stories of Iowa, where they have fully adopted these systems, having no drinkable water without super-deep wells and expensive treatment systems piping heavily chlorinated water to the countryside. There was deep concern from the neighborhood around the proposed facility of mist and heavy air pooling in the valley carrying fumes at toxic levels, and of not knowing if they will still have drinkable water.

While all these concerns were dismissed by the owner AV Roth, assuring us that high-tech modern methods could address everything, it is hard to believe that these submitted plans and technologies are so precise when the Nutrient Management Plan is three years old and filled with discrepancies. We already see polluted streams, contaminated wells, and periodic intense odor around Roth Feeder Pig I. This facility would be the same model, but on more dangerous topography, and is predicted to produce more than triple the manure. And yet, on August 9th, the Crawford County Land Conservation Committee (LCC) approved the permits for the proposed expanded Roth Feeder Pig II facility south of Steuben, above the lower Kickapoo River.

This approval was made "pending DNR approval of a new Nutrient Management Plan" which needs to replace the 480 acres (33% of the total acres!) which CSP and our supporters have identified as unavailable for spreading. This means there are still hurdles that this CAFO must clear before operating, and there is unlikely to be any spreading before 2024... but at this point there is little hope that this operation will be denied outright, with no viable legal recourse until damages are done. That said, the 157 public comments submitted to Crawford County opposing this operation, dozens of Letters to the Editor, our requests for Environmental Impact Statements, field verifications, and generally outstanding participation through available public input has been important.

It has been made clear to the county, the state, and CAFO operators everywhere that while the cards may be stacked in favor of industrial ag, We the People of this area do not want these in our communities, and proposals such as this will be opposed and monitored at every opportunity. And while we carefully watch this operation, and continue taking baseline ground- and surface-water data to be able to show any impacts to our waters, we will not be waiting idly for the next proposal to come forward. This will not be the last such application.

Currently, there is nothing stopping dozens more of these from being permitted across this region. If 9.4 million gallons of liquid manure can be produced and spread on a narrow cave- and sinkhole-riddled ridge overlooking the Kickapoo Bottoms, a DNR Conservation Opportunity Area flowing into the Wisconsin State Riverway wetlands of international importance, in an area scattered with ancient sacred mounds, the DNR will permit these anywhere... the next one could be larger... and could be next to you.

## What's next? Local action!

Having seen what broad-based well-founded public opposition to such proposals means to the state and county



Used w permission of Richland Co artist, Ken Stark

(not as much as we'd hoped), we now turn back to our most democratic unit of government: our local municipalities. CSP plans to work township by township to help locals pass proactive ordinances dictating how a CAFO must operate, if they are indeed to be sited here. Not only will these serve as basic protections should a CAFO come to town, but they will serve as an additional deterrent from operating here in the first place.

It has been six years since the first such ordinance was passed in Bayfield County, and despite constant threat of litigation, none has been struck down, and they are now being passed by a coalition of townships who value their communities enough to set higher standards for protection of health, safety, and general welfare than the bare-bones one-size-fits-all regulations offered by the DNR.

As usual, while CSP can promise to be there to support and inform your efforts, we turn to each of you to build the needed relationships and take action in your own township on this front. For now, we suggest simply showing up and getting to know your township people and the process, while we get you some background information, assemble township teams, and map out our strategy.

Please contact  
CSP Program Coordinator  
Forest Jahnke  
608-632-2183  
fjahnke@crawfordstewardship.org

If you are ready to get involved and make CAFO protections a reality in your township!



## Farmers Unite!

By Forest Jahnke and Elizabeth Moffett

While we may be labeled “anti-agriculture activists” by some, we sure do love our farmers! We especially love local farmers organizing to support each other, produce food for local people, care for our water and soils, and break the monopoly control of our food systems. This means we love the Farmers Union! And not only do we care, we are actively organizing to form new chapters, collaborate on events, and build local membership.

In 2019, CSP helped spearhead the formation of the Iowa/Grant Co Chapter, noting that this neighboring important agricultural area was not covered. Michelle Godez, dairy farmworker and UW Platteville staff program assistant, and now Secretary of the chapter worked closely with us. She recalls, “I met Crawford Stewardship Project at their January 2018 event in Boscobel, WI, called “Industrial Ag in the Driftless” and Wisconsin Farmers Union was one of the collaborating groups at the event. When some friends and I noticed that southwest Wisconsin lacked a WFU chapter, I contacted CSP to ask about their needs and interests. Subsequently, a group of us met at a restaurant outside Montfort, WI, with a WFU representative to discuss starting a chapter. On June 26, 2019, the Wisconsin Farmers Union Iowa-Grant chapter was launched!”

Amidst the Covid era, the WFU Iowa-Grant chapter has held Holiday Cookie Exchange chapter meetings, a tour of SW Tech College Growtainer, pasture walks, and a film screening. Yet this still left Crawford County unrepresented, so CSP successfully worked to merge with the Vernon County Chapter in 2020. From there, collaborations have abounded. Chapter leadership has since shifted to young and energetic local farmers, and we interviewed Dylan and Skye Bruce, new President and Treasurer/Secretary, to give you more insights into them and the direction of our local Farmers Union chapter.

Dylan grew up on a CSA farm in Crawford County, while Skye grew up on the East Coast. They got to know each other while managing the student garden at Occidental College. In 2016 they moved back to Madison, and in 2018 they decided to found Circadian Organics, a CSA vegetable farm, on the land in Freeman Township where Dylan grew up. Dylan also grows out seed contracts for regional companies like Seed Savers Exchange and Nature and Nurture Seeds, and Skye also manages native prairie seed production and a cut flower CSA.

### • *Why are you part of Wisconsin Farmers Union?*

The core principles of Farmers Union are Cooperation, Education, and Legislation. Ultimately it's a community of folks uniting to grow family agriculture and to support a sustainable

*As well as the Farmers Union, CSP works actively with other farm organizations across the state and nation. We helped spearhead and continue to lead in the Sustain Rural Wisconsin Network, and collaborate regularly with Family Farm Defenders, Land Stewardship Project, and Socially Responsible Agriculture Project. All organizations worth checking out!*

rural future. Our fellow members plowed our first fields for Circadian, have taught us a lot about farming, and much more. Being a part of the Wisconsin Farmers Union gives us the opportunity to be a part of an inclusive and effective organization lobbying in support of issues that impact us as beginning farmers. The food at the potlucks ain't bad either!

### • *How is the Farmers Union meeting the needs of and advocating for farmers and rural communities?*

Farmers Union works at Local, State, and Federal levels of government to advocate for both farmers and rural communities. We have an effective, boots-on-the-ground organizing team that makes a difference around the state, supported by dedicated government relations staff. Every year we host a ‘Farm and Rural Lobby Day’ at the State Capitol, and we would invite you to experience the empowerment of that advocacy alongside us. Current focus issues include climate change, monopoly power, farmer-labor solidarity, fair maps (redistricting), and meat processing infrastructure.

### • *What does our local chapter of the Farmers Union need to thrive?*

The thing our chapter (Vernon-Crawford) needs most is engagement from the local community. Signing up to be a member gives us a more powerful voice at the state, and hence federal, level to advocate for issues that matter in our little corner of the world.

### • *What are you hoping to contribute to your fellow farmer, and how can others do the same?*

The Wisconsin Farmers Union membership is made up of people from all walks of agriculture and life. From conventional to organic, rural to urban, our members find community in an organization that empowers them to have a voice in the issues that affect them. You don't have to be a farmer to be a member, because the needs of farmers and rural communities are so synergistic.

***If you're interested in being involved just reach out to WI Farmers Union membership coordinator, Alicia Razvi, at [arazvi@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:arazvi@wisconsinfarmersunion.com).***

# WQM Report continued from page 1

Could it be as simple as taking conscious and organized actions, aligned with the rights of nature and humans?

Over a decade of CSP's Water Quality Monitoring (WQM) Program, we have worked with our volunteers, labs, and scientists to understand how human practices are impacting the streams, focusing on both potential threats to people and the water bodies. In the last couple years, the surface and groundwater levels have been altered by the decrease in rainfall and snowmelt. The soil seems to be thirsty, and many springs are dry! This means that due to reduced runoff, the number of pathogens and nutrients shown in recent samples seem to be less, but the reality is that land use has not improved, and major pollution is only one heavy rainfall away. All contamination affects human beings, and all the habitats that depend on healthy and sufficient soil and water.

There are seven streams within three main zones that are being monitored in Crawford County by CSP, as follows:

- **Zone 1:** Two sites around a Dairy Animal Farming Operation
- **Zone 2:** Three sites around a Hog Confined Animal Farming Operation (CAFO)
- **Zone 3:** Two sites around a proposed Hog CAFO (from the same owner as the CAFO of Zone 2, both nearby facilities together would become the largest CAFO in Wisconsin spreading 12,400,000 gallons of liquid manure/year).

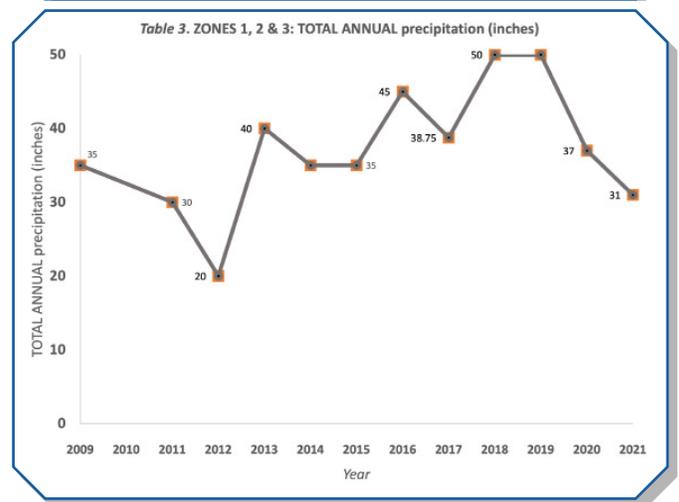
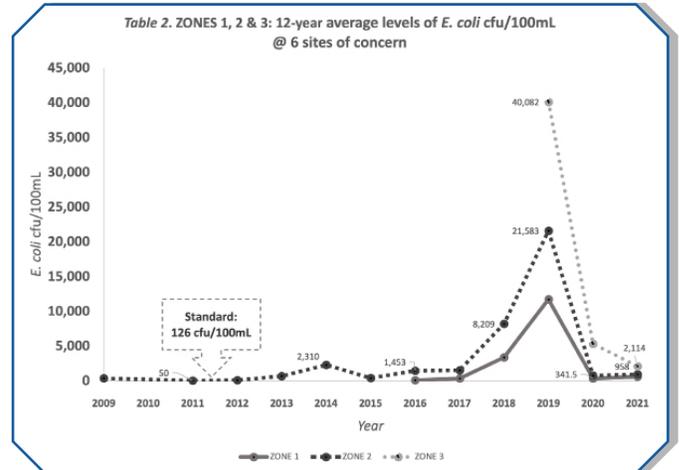
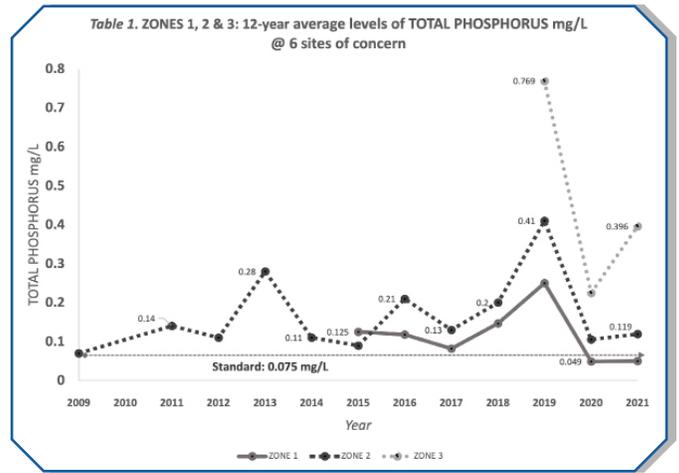
In the charts, you will see the seasonal average of nutrients (*Total Phosphorus*; See Table 1) and *E. coli* (See Table 2) found every year over our last decade of monitoring at six out of seven sites of concern. The surprising fact is that Zone 3 has already shown alarming levels of nutrient/pathogens even before the industrial hog facility proposing to annually produce 9.4 million gallons of liquid manure has been built.

The three Zones' total annual average precipitation (See Table 3) will give you a better idea of how rainfall influences the pollution in surface water due to runoff.

If you are willing to see, explore and act, join the 2023 WQM season (from May to October), by filling out our Volunteer Survey Form in the GET INVOLVED! section of [crawfordstewardship.org](http://crawfordstewardship.org) or contact us directly. A WQM Training will be held in April 2023, in which you will be introduced to basic water quality monitoring parameters (water & air temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity, flow, potential pathogens, and nutrients sampling (*E. coli*, coliforms, background bacteria, fungi, antibiotic resistant bacteria, and total phosphorus) will be added into your monitoring skillset.

Feel free to contact me at:

[oheras@crawfordstewardship.org](mailto:oheras@crawfordstewardship.org), 608-632-7021



Volunteers Deb & Bill H., Carl S., Kat T., Ric T., Jim S., Fred H. & Omaru H. after good mornings of monitoring sites of concern, one of them ended with delicious ice cream accompanied by Edie E.!

Sunday, November 13th, 2-4pm  
Gays Mills Community Commerce Center



JOIN US FOR A FILM AND DISCUSSION ON FARMING AND HOW WHAT WE DO IN ONE PLACE DEEPLY IMPACTS THE WORLD

Snacks provided

Co-sponsored by WI Farmers Union, Sterling-Crawford Local Chapter and the Gays Mills Library

