

Grant County

Land & Water Conservation  Zoning & Sanitation

*"Think of what is best for the environment and the community, after
all that is what we are here for." - Calumet County*

A study prepared in collaboration.

The Grant County Conservationist
The Grant County Personnel Director
The University of Wisconsin Extension-Grant County

May 3, 2013

Grant County

Land & Water Conservation



Zoning & Sanitation

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Overview

On April 2, 2013 a meeting was held by the Grant County Land & Water Conservation Committee and the Grant County Zoning & Sanitation Committee to discuss the vacancy of the Zoning & Sanitation Administrator and the possible merger of the Land & Water Conservation Department and Zoning & Sanitation Department. One of the outcomes of that discussion was the request for a study to assist the Grant County Board in making an informed decision. The University of Wisconsin Extension-Grant County, the Grant County Personnel Director, and the Grant County Conservationist worked together to develop the following materials.

Change

It is well documented that for a majority of people change is stressful. In order to minimize that stress, it is important that those who are affected by change be included in the change process. This report features a series of surveys and interviews designed to provide insight and guidance. Included are interviews of committee chairpersons, an administrator, and staff. It is important to consider the thoughts and feelings of those individuals for which a potential change may affect their lives. At the same time, it is important to recognize when change is necessary and what steps can be taken to minimize its negative impacts.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Grant County Board of Supervisors with a baseline of information from which to make an informed decision. This report is limited to the facts and does not contain recommendations or suggestions by the University of Wisconsin Extension-Grant County, the Grant County Personnel Director, or the Grant County Conservationist. Elected members will need to draw their own conclusions to determine a course of action, if any.

Land & Water Conservation: Background

County level conservation efforts came into being after the Dust Bowl and other erosion concerns of the 1930's were addressed by Congress. Legislation was passed at the national level creating a federal agency to address erosion issues and enabling states to create a new special purpose unit of government, soil conservation districts. Wisconsin passed similar legislation in 1939 that provided for the creation of districts based upon county boundaries. Grant County created their first Conservation District by resolution of the County Board in May 1940. The Grant County Agricultural Committee automatically became the supervisors of these districts. On June 12, the supervisors requested the assistance of a conservationist to help develop a program of work for the County and also to carry on educational activities. They also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Soil Conservation Service to provide technical assistance to the district.

In the late 1970's the state began funding programs to assist in efforts to reduce soil erosion and address water quality impairments from polluted runoff. At that time many counties began adding Conservation District field staff to administer these programs because federal staff in the counties had to deal with other federal priorities and did not have time for the new state programs.

In 1981, in order to address the difficulties of funding and the confusion of a separate level of government, the state passed WI Statutes Chapter 92 which incorporated the Soil Conservation District into county government as the Land Conservation Department making them another part of county government. Along with that change the state created more state programs to address soil erosion and water pollution, including the Farmland Preservation Program, Erosion Control Program, Animal Waste Management Program and Priority Watershed Program. Along with these programs and their included cost sharing of conservation practices the state provided grants to counties to offset some of the cost for staff to administer these programs.

Land Conservation Departments have operated under these Chapter 92 rules since 1981 with only minor changes. The rules require counties to develop and implement Land and Water Resource Management Plans approved by a state board and provide both staff and implementation grants to address goals identified in the plan. The statutes also provide the authority for counties to pass local legislation to address severe local pollution or erosion concerns but few counties have taken advantage of that authority instead relying on state regulations and local enforcement of those requirements to address resource concerns. Land Conservation Departments are the primary local delivery system of natural resource programs. Following are the statutory responsibilities of land conservation committees:

- Provide cost-sharing, technical and planning programs.
- Distribute and allocate funds for conservation activities.
- Actively solicit public participation in planning and evaluation of soil and water conservation programs.
- Adopt and administer soil and water conservation standards.
- Prepare work plans.

Grant County Land & Water Conservationist: Description

This position is the administrative head for the Land & Water Conservation Department staff. Provides staff support to the Land & Water Conservation Committee and provides administrative services in the areas of program management and planning, conservation information and education, land unit conservation and technical information.

Zoning & Sanitation: Background

The United States Congress passed the Land Ordinance Act of 1785 to prescribe the division of land into six-mile square townships, thus creating our Public Land Survey System (PLSS). Each of these townships is then sub-divided into 36 sections of one square mile or 640 acres. The establishment of this rectangular survey has been called "the largest single act of national planning in our history and the most significant in terms of continuing impact on political bodies".

This Act also provided government land cheaply to whoever would farm it, which led to intense land speculation. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, used to formulate the Wisconsin state constitution, among other things, established the public trust doctrine, which declares that all navigable waters are "common highways and forever free", and held in trust by the Department of Natural Resources. This, along with the Water Quality Management Act of 1965, is the basis of

shoreland zoning in Wisconsin.

The development of ordinances started in the late 1800's with tenement housing laws and ordinances prohibiting certain obnoxious uses in certain districts; thus the beginning of land-use zoning in the United States. In 1909, Wisconsin becomes the first state to pass enabling legislation permitting cities to plan. Other states soon followed suit, and in 1922 the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act was issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce, which served as a model for zoning enabling legislation for many states. In 1928, the Standard City Planning Enabling Act was issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce, which serves as the basis for planning enabling legislation for many states.

Zoning is a form of police power the state exercises when using its authority to adopt legislation to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. This authority is delegated to local units of government as zoning regulations. In 1926, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of comprehensive zoning in *Euclid v. Ambler Realty*, holding that the enactment of zoning use districts is a permissible use of a state or local government's police power.

County planning and zoning functions are authorized under Wis. Stats. 59.69. Planning authority is granted under Wis. Stats. 59.69(3) through the preparation and adoption of a county development plan. After the year 2010, if the county wished to continue to engage in said land use administrative programs, the development plan process is further defined and described in Wis. Stats. 66.1001. The county zoning function is prescribed in Wis. Stats. 59.65(5) if the county desires, or has, a county zoning ordinance applicable to unincorporated towns.

Further, all counties in the state are required to enact a shoreland protection program, as a result of the Water Quality Management Act of 1965. Counties are required to adopt said shoreland regulations under Wis. Stats. 59.69(2) for unincorporated shoreland pursuant to NR 115 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. As part of that responsibility, most, if not all, of the counties have a sanitary code enforcement responsibility, which is authorized in Wis. Stats. 59.70 and those responsibilities were a major part of the shoreland regulation enacted in the late 1960s. Some of the zoning code enforcement offices in the counties also have responsibility for construction site erosion and stormwater management, as specified in Wis. Stats. 59.69(3). However, many have separate land conservation agencies responsible for this function.

Counties are required to regulate land uses in floodplains, pursuant to Wis. Stats. 87.30 and NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Further, as part of the administrative procedures for the regulation of the zoning, pursuant to Wis. Stats. 59.69(4), a county board of adjustment is required to be in place to consider and decide upon appeals, special exceptions and variances to the terms and conditions of the zoning ordinance and shoreland and floodland ordinance.

Most counties also exercise subdivision plat review authority under Wis. Stats. Ch. 236, whereby subdivisions throughout the county, including incorporated areas, are reviewed pursuant to the provisions of that statute. Some counties, though not many, have also elected to perform building inspection services for the jurisdictional area of their zoning codes, authorized under Wis. Stats. 59.69(8). In some counties, the land information and county survey functions, set forth in

Wis. Stats. 59.72-59.75., provide for a county surveyor function, land information, land records and for the relocation and perpetuation of section corners and section lines.

Grant County has adopted a County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance that includes:

- General Provisions
- Primary Zoning Districts
- Overlay Districts
- Special Regulations
- Administration
- Definitions

In 2010, the Grant County Planning & Zoning Department merged with the Grant County Sanitation Department. Since then, all zoning and sanitation activities are administered through the Grant County Zoning & Sanitation Department under the direction of the County Zoning & Sanitation Administrator.

In addition to the Grant County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning & Sanitation Department administers the Grant County Comprehensive "Smart Growth" Plan, the Grant County Farmland Preservation Plan, the Grant County Floodplain Ordinance, and the Grant County Subdivision of Land Ordinance. Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) assists Grant County Zoning & Sanitation administer the Grant County Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance.

Grant County Zoning & Sanitation Administrator: Description

This position administers State mandated programs including Floodplain and Shoreland-Wetland Ordinances and the Grant County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. This position is also responsible for the enforcement of the county private sewage system ordinance and to protect the environmental health and welfare of the residents of Grant County. The Zoning & Sanitation Administrator serves as the County contact for State's Farmland Preservation Program/Working Lands Initiative. The essential functions for the position are listed below.

Committee Chair Interviews: Summary

On April 10, 2013 both County Board Supervisors who chair the Land & Water Conservation Committee and the Zoning & Sanitation Committee were interviewed by phone. Both were asked to list the "Pro's & Con's" of merging the two departments. The (2) chairpersons believed that if a change is needed, this would be the time to make that change. The both raised concerns on how this change would affect the staff.

***Note:** For the complete account, go to "Appendix C: Committee Chair Interview: Results".

Administrator Interview: Summary

On April 4, 2013 the County Conservationist submitted a list of "Pro's & Con's" regarding the merging of the two departments. In regards to "pros", most items had to do with increasing efficiency and reducing equipment costs. Potential "cons" surrounded transition costs and identity loss.

***Note:** For the complete account, go to "Appendix D: Administrator Interview: Results".

County Survey & Interviews: Summary

On April 8, 2013 the County Conservationist collected responses from county land & water conservationists from around the state. As a follow up, the University of Wisconsin Extension spent the following 3 weeks interviewing departments to provide additional input. Of the (48) counties contacted, (30) had merged Land & Water Conservation with some other department, (26) of those merged Land & Water with Zoning. The following text reflects those (26) counties with merged departments.

What was the purpose of the merger?

- Financial: (10) references
- Efficiency: (11) references
- Retirements/Attrition: (4) references
- Increase Service: (3) references
- Political: (1) references

What changes did you make regarding staffing?

Counties reported several different staffing changes that more than likely reflect differences among organizational structures from county to county. In some instances, counties added staff, replaced staff, eliminated staff, reassigned staff, or a combination thereof. In most cases, it appears as though staffing numbers stayed about the same with a reliance on cross-training or reassignment.

Was there any money saved? If so, how much?

- Yes: (16) counties
 - How Much?
 - \$43,234 / year (lost 2 employees to attrition)
 - \$50,000 / year (downsized 2 positions to 1 position)
 - \$130,000/ year (eliminated 1.5 FTE)
 - \$150,000/ year (staff reductions through attrition)
 - \$200,000/ year (eliminated 4 positions)
 - \$60,000 – 80,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
 - \$5,000 – 10,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
 - \$75,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
- No: (5) counties, one of which indicated an increase
- Unsure: (1) county

Overall, was the move positive or negative?

- Adapted Over Time: (2) counties
- Positive: (14) counties
- Negative: (1) county
- Neutral/ Good & Bad/ Not Necessarily Bad: (8) counties
- Broke into separate depts. again 2 years ago: (1) county

For the counties who chose to combine departments, most made the decision based on increasing efficiency or saving money. Those who combined did so using a variety of staffing combinations. About half of them saved money. Of that half, only half of them know how much money they saved. In almost all cases, the move was positive or neutral overall.

***Note:** For the complete account, go to “Appendix E: County Survey & Interviews: Results”.

Staff Survey: Summary

On April 9, 2013 the University of Wisconsin Extension-Grant County conducted an online survey of both Land & Water Conservation and Zoning & Sanitation staff. All staff were invited to take the survey. Of the (5) Land & Water Conservation staff, (4) completed the survey. Of the (2) Zoning & Sanitation staff, (2) completed the survey. The following text includes the survey questions along with a summary of their responses.

What benefits do you see for combining the (2) departments?

Half of the responses indicated potential efficiencies that could be gained by a merger while the other half did not recognize any benefits. Another person indicated that the only benefits would be (1) county committee, instead of (2).

What challenges do you see in combining the (2) departments?

The respondents raised concerns over workload, funding, level of service, and space. In addition, differences about the departments' mission, purpose, and work environment were identified.

I believe a combined department will be beneficial to the users of those services.

- Strongly Disagree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Disagree: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Neutral: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Agree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

A combined department will be more efficient.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Neutral: 66.7%, (4) responses
- Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

A combined department will eventually be good for the staff.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 66.7%, (4) responses
- Neutral: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

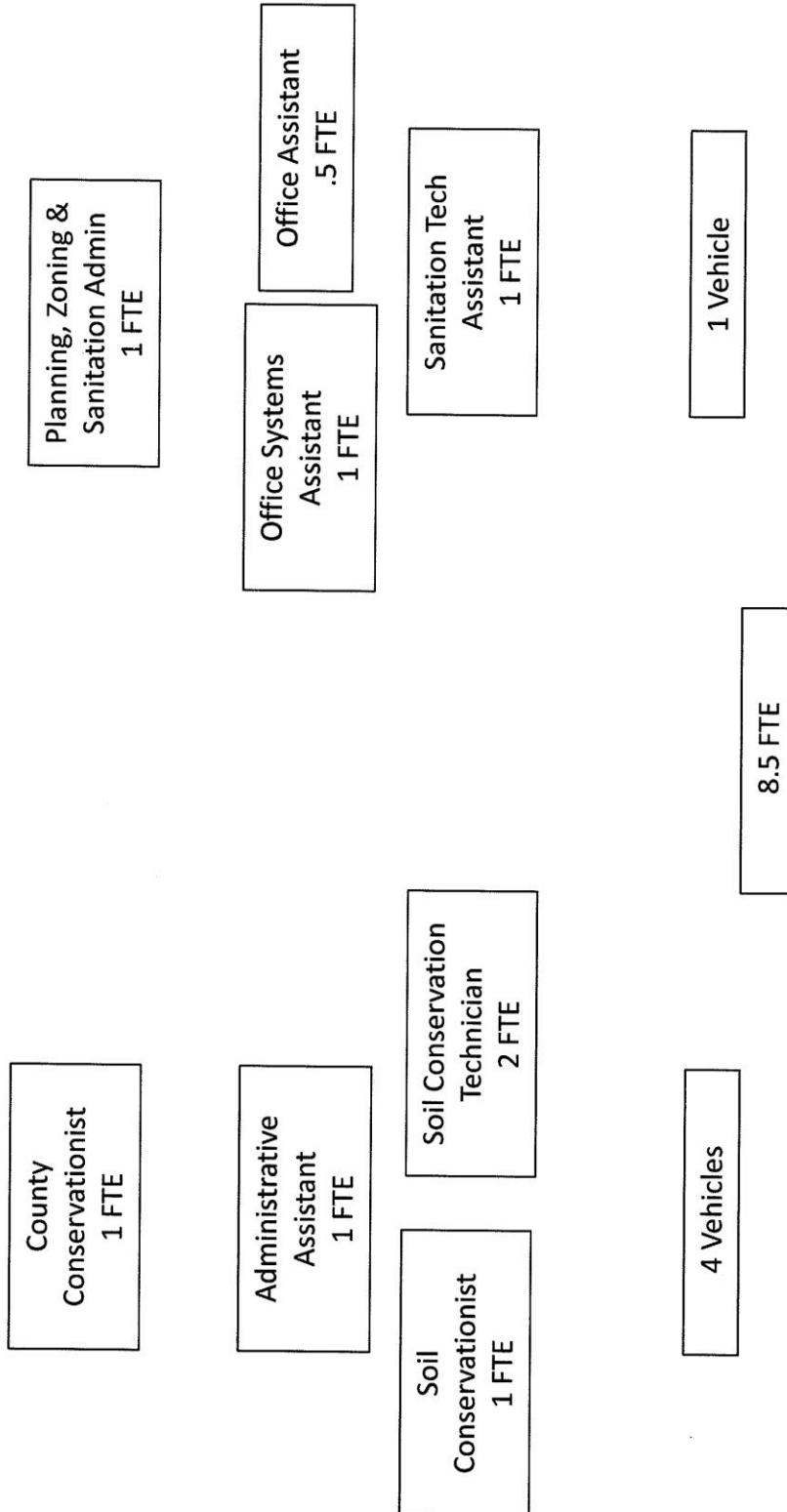
If the (2) departments were to combine, I would look forward to the challenge of making it a success.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Neutral: 16.7%, (1) response
- Agree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Strongly Agree: 50.0%, (3) responses

***Note:** For the complete account, go to “Appendix G: Staff Survey Results”.

Appendix A: Current Staffing Diagram

Grant County Conservation, Planning, Zoning & Sanitation Office Currently



Appendix B: 2013 Estimated Hourly Wage & Benefit Package Analysis

CURRENT 2013 Estimated Hourly Wage and Benefit Package Analysis											
	Land and Water Conservation Department						Zoning / Sanitation Department				
	Soil & Water Conservation Technician (Randy)	Soil & Water Conservation Technician (Kevin)	Soil & Water Conservation Technician (Alan)	Administrative Support Assistant (Annette)	County Conservationist (Lynda)		Office Systems Assistant (Janet)	Zoning / Sanitation Technician (Jeff)	Office Assistant (half time) (Shelley)	Zoning / Sanitation Administrator (Terry)	
Pay Rate:	3D + \$0.30 22.41	3D + \$0.25 22.36	3D + \$0.30 22.41	7D + \$0.15 16.32	F6 \$2119.20 bi-weekly		5D + \$0.30 15.6	3D 22.11	3C 13.32	E7 \$2041.60 bi-weekly	
Estimated Gross Wage	\$ 46,613	\$ 46,509	\$ 46,613	\$ 33,946	\$ 55,099		\$ 32,448	\$ 45,989	\$ 13,853	\$ 53,082	
FICA	\$ 3,541	\$ 3,420	\$ 3,544	\$ 2,459	\$ 4,191		\$ 2,344	\$ 3,518	\$ 1,009	\$ 3,851	
Retirement	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,093	\$ 3,100	\$ 2,257	\$ 3,664		\$ 2,158	\$ 3,058	\$ 921	\$ 3,530	
Health Insurance	\$ 8,129	\$ 12,240	\$ 7,467	\$ 12,240	\$ 8,129		\$ 12,240	\$ -	\$ 6,986	\$ 17,574	
Life Insurance	\$ 24	\$ 24	\$ 24	\$ 24	\$ 24		\$ 24	\$ 24	\$ 12	\$ 24	
A D & D Insurance	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4		\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 2	\$ 4	
Long Term Disability	\$ 121	\$ 121	\$ 121	\$ 88	\$ 143		\$ 84	\$ 120	\$ 36	\$ 138	
Total Estimated Benefits	\$ 14,919	\$ 18,902	\$ 14,260	\$ 17,072	\$ 16,155		\$ 16,854	\$ 6,724	\$ 8,966	\$ 25,121	
Total Benefit Package	\$ 61,532	\$ 65,411	\$ 60,873	\$ 51,018	\$ 71,254		\$ 49,302	\$ 52,713	\$ 22,819	\$ 78,203	
Total Cost by Department					\$ 310,087					\$ 203,037	
Combined Total										\$ 513,124	

Appendix C: Committee Chair Interviews

On April 10th, both County Board Supervisors who chair the Land & Water Conservation Committee and the Zoning & Sanitation Committee were interviewed by phone. Both were asked to list the “Pro’s & Con’s” of merging the two departments. Their responses are listed below.

Pros

- *“Now is the time to do it.”*
- *“Do it now without losing a department head.”*
- *“If it’s in the best interest, we have a good candidate in Lynda to step forward.”*
- *“The staff will step up, but they may need additional staff to help with zoning and sanitation.”*

Cons

- *“Will the service in the County be hurt?”*
- *“There will be an adjustment period with people understanding it. Workers and users.”*
- *“I’m concerned about how it might affect the workers.”*

From the text above, it appears that both County Board Supervisors believe that if combining the departments is a good move, now is the time to do it. In addition, both raise concerns about transition.

Appendix D: Administrator Interviews

On April 4, 2013 the County Conservationist submitted the following list of "Pro's & Con's" regarding the merging of the two departments.

Pros

- *More staff to handle the workload*
- *Eventually be able to cross train to provide customer service*
- *Consolidation of zoning clerical staff from 1.5 to 1*
- *Consolidation of fleet from 5 to 4*
- *Improved communication between departments*
- *Better utilize unused space at conservation office*

Cons

- *Potential to lose DATCP staffing grant funds by working on zoning workload*
- *One less supervisor to concentrate on topics specific to their department, research rule changes, ordinances, meetings, etc.*
- *Short term confusion in location and responsibilities*
- *Initial increase in training costs to establish cross training*
- *Need to wire building for internet and incur additional internet charge in budget , if programs are not approved for federal system*
- *Potential appearance of changing from voluntary involvement of conservation to regulatory approach in zoning*
- *Loss of conservation focus if committee's merge*
- *If there is any poor employee morale due to the merge, it could upset office cohesiveness*

Appendix E: County Survey & Interview Results

On April 8th, 2013 the County Conservationist collected responses from county land & water conservationists from around the state. As a follow up, the University of Wisconsin Extension spent the following 3 weeks interviewing departments to provide additional input. Of the (48) counties contacted, (30) had merged Land & Water Conservation with some other department, (26) of those merged Land & Water with Zoning. The following text reflects those (26) counties with merged departments.

1. What was the purpose of the merger?

- Financial: (10) references
- Efficiency: (11) references
- Retirements/Attrition: (4) references
- Increase Service: (3) references
- Political: (1) references

2. What changes did you make regarding staffing?

Counties reported several different staffing changes that more than likely reflect differences among organizational structures from county to county. In some instances, counties added staff, replaced staff, eliminated staff, reassigned staff, or a combination thereof. In most cases, it appears as though staffing numbers stayed about the same with a reliance on cross-training or reassignment.

3. Was there any money saved? If so, how much?

- Yes: (16) counties
 - How Much?
 - \$43,234 / year (lost 2 employees to attrition)
 - \$50,000 / year (downsized 2 positions to 1 position)
 - \$130,000/ year (eliminated 1.5 FTE)
 - \$150,000/ year (staff reductions through attrition)
 - \$200,000/ year (eliminated 4 positions)
 - \$60,000 – 80,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
 - \$5,000 – 10,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
 - \$75,000 / year (eliminated 1 position)
- No: (5) counties, one of which indicated an increase
- Unsure: (1) county

4. Overall, was the move positive or negative?

- Adapted Over Time: (2) counties
 - "Don't let conservation office lose its identity"
 - "Access to better technology, less time for conservation priorities, be organized up front"
- Positive: (14) counties

- "Very happy overall, wouldn't want to go back other way, nothing but positive. More opportunities together, quicker answers. Cross training between departments - good asset. People left, incorporated their jobs with existing people if worked better. Only benefits to combining offices."
- "Feels that is good to hire outside for a director then within because current workers have friends that may or may not be assets to the business, but kept in position. Lots of middle mgt. positions before merging."
- "Make sure everyone's jobs/roles are made clear when you start. Easier with all offices working together in one place."
- "Take time to think about why they are doing it and what positive impacts can come from the change."
- "Be clear about up-front objectives. Leadership is critical"
- "Co-location is a must"
- "Keep your focus on how to best serve your customers."
- "Think of what is best for the environment and the community, after all that is what we are here for."
- "There are counties who have set up separate divisions, within a consolidated department. You may want to look at those types of structures. By having separate divisions you will not lose sight of the purpose/goals of each department that was consolidated in the merger."
- "Planning Development and zoning committee together. Land Conservation separate committee. Wishes it was all one committee, would be easier. Encourage you to do one committee if they join, much easier. Just because you combine depts., doesn't mean the work goes away, others have to absorb it."
- "All have same budget now, easier."
- "Took a long time to get where they are today. Bumpy road at first, works wonderful now, great partnerships. Dept. head became division mgr., not good at first, when he left things got much better. Brought all departments together, esp. when all working on same project. Parks Division was a great addition. Location of depts. all together is BEST, all in same office, public appreciated that. Combined several offices at first, then some broke away, then 6-7 years ago Land & Water Conservation joined them."
- Negative: (1) county
 - "Don't let it happen! "
- Neutral/ Good & Bad/ Not Necessarily Bad: (8) counties
 - "Improved communications between departments, but less staff means less is getting done on the land."
 - "Departments remained the same, elevated some to report directly to Administrator."
 - "Prefers the individual depts., for the sake of conservation and customer service."
 - "Works fine BUT ONLY BECAUSE the LCC has remained as a separate committee that does have the ability to bring items directly to County Board."

- “Prepare a study of the proposed merger, pros and cons and if you think you can truly provide better services for the citizens or the same services at a lower cost. Then it is right, if not do not merge.”
- “Improved communications between departments, but inconvenienced the landowners.”
- “Keep the LCC intact.”
- “One stop place much easier for public, but heavier work load for employees.”
- Broke into separate depts. again 2 years ago: (1) county
 - “Each department seems fine working on their own again. Except now, with offices re-located, it has become a little more inconvenient for staff and public not to be in close proximity.”

For the counties who chose to combine departments, most made the decision based on increasing efficiency or saving money. Those who combined did so using a variety of staffing combinations. About half of them saved money. Of that half, only half of them know how much money they saved. In almost all cases, the move was positive or neutral overall.

***Note:** For specific information regarding each county, go to “Appendix F: Individual County Surveys & Interview Results”.

Appendix F: Individual County Survey & Interview Results

Land & Water Conservation departments who had combined with Zoning were asked to complete an online survey. Follow-up phone calls and interviews were conducted to retrieve additional knowledge. Counties with similar attributes to Grant County are designated with the symbols below.

Counties within $\pm 20\%$ of Grant County's

Total Area (total sq. mi.)



Counties within $\pm 20\%$ of Grant County's

Total Population



Counties within $\pm 20\%$ of Grant County's

Total Number of Farm Operations



County: Barron



Did you merge any departments? Yes- 5 Depts.

How many departments combined? Survey, Land Infor, GIS, Real Property, Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments? *Convenience*Working together so much should be in one office.*Thing to do.

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes*Two retired and did not refill.*Zoning person is retiring not going to fill the position now.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? *Yes*Building rental*Office equipment etc.*Salaries

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Make sure everyone's jobs/roles are made clear when you start. Easier with all offices working together in one place.

County: Buffalo

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 5 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments?

Did you have any changes to staff? Downsized Admin. Inc. staff

Was there money saved? If so, how much? No

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Take time to think about why they are doing it and what positive impacts can come from the change.

County: Calumet



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Service

Did you have any changes to staff? Downsized 2 positions to one

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$50,000

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Think of what is best for the environment and the community, after all that is what we are here for.

County: Dunn



Did you merge any departments? Yes - 5 years

How many departments combined? 5 depts: Land Cons, Solid Waste, Planning & Zoning, and Surveyor

What was the primary reason for combining departments? More efficient. Improve Communication

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes. Had 3 part time secretaries now have 1 full time. Slow in refilling, but did, re-evaluated.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive, except moved Extension out and they worked with them a lot also, Liked having Mapping & Zoning

Suggestions: Did not merge depts, self directed team concepts. Reorganized how they did business. More efficient. Better lines communication. One committee for all depts., except Solid Waste has own board still. No dept. head over the five depts.

County: Eau Claire

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 7 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments?

Did you have any changes to staff?

Was there money saved? If so, how much?

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Neutral

Suggestions: Works fine BUT ONLY BECAUSE the LCC has remained as a separate committee that does have the ability to bring items directly to County Board.

County: Kenosha

Did you merge any departments? Yes - 20 years ago

How many departments combined? 6 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Not sure then, guessing it was to work hand-in-hand.

Did you have any changes to staff? Staff same as far as he knew.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Unsure if or how much money was saved.

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive. Lots of cross over of work before merge.

Suggestions: All have same budget now, easier.

County: Lincoln

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zone/LIO

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Attrition

Did you have any changes to staff? Eliminated 5, Added 1

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Neutral

Suggestions: Improved communications between departments, but less staff means less is getting done on the land

County: Marathon



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 4 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget

Did you have any changes to staff? Reassigned 1, Eliminated 1

Was there money saved? If so, how much?

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Neutral

Suggestions: Prepare a study of the proposed merger, pros and cons and if you think you can truly provide better services for the citizens or the same services at a lower cost. Then it is right, if not do not merge.

County: Marinette



Did you merge any departments? Yes - 9 years ago

How many departments combined? Zoning & Sanitarian and Solid Waste Property Listing Survey GIS Coordinator within IRS, Land and Conservation

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget. 10 years ago was \$712,000 budget with changes now \$700,000

Did you have any changes to staff? Hired director. Eliminated some. Changed people from 35-40 hours and eliminated 1 position in Zoning. Eliminated county surveyor and assistant and absorbed in other depts. and contracted some out.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes, not sure overall. \$25,000 health Ins. \$50,000 staffing. Less office equipment. Less supplies. Rent. Secretaries . Cross trained people so didn't have to pay Ltes to fill in for vacs.

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Yes, you have to have a good staff that buy-in to help make it successful.

Suggestions: One Committee for all depts. Have meetings as needed, 2 hour meetings instead of 5, more efficient. Cross trained employees between depts. was great asset, depts. worked together well, saved a lot of money. One director, he makes overall decisions. Eliminated county sevor and assistant and absorbed it within other staff members or contracted out. Are now producing the Plat Book for their County every 2 years with their map system and have someone print it.

County: Menominee

Did you merge any departments? Yes - 9 years ago

How many departments combined? 3 Depts: Land Conservation, Forestry, Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes. 1 full time, benefits, 1 part time/no benefits. Contracts out building & sanitation

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes, salaries, fringe benefits, unsure of amount

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Good & Bad. Conservation & Zoning overlapped so that helped.

Suggestions: One stop place much easier for public, but heavier work load for employees.

County: Ozaukee

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zon

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Efficiency

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes 1.5 FTE

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$130,000

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Keep your focus on how to best serve your customers.

County: Portage

Did you merge any departments? Yes - in 1980

How many departments combined? 4 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget. Bring Dpts together. More efficient. Cross training between depts.

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes. Cross trained staff. People left, incorporate their jobs with others. Some not filled cause of budget

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Noting but positive. Convenient for public and staff.

Suggestions: Very happy overall, wouldn't want to go back other way, nothing but positive. More opportunities together, quicker answers. Cross training between departments - good asset. People left, incorporated their jobs with existing people if worked better. Only benefits to combining offices.

County: Price



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 3 Depts: LCD/Planning, Zoning, Sanitation

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Previous Zoning person took another job so they distributed duties within other depts.

Did you have any changes to staff? Eliminated 1 position - zoning

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$60-\$80,000

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Not necessarily bad

Suggestions:

County: Racine

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 9 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget/Efficiency

Did you have any changes to staff? Eliminated 4 positions

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$200,000

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Adapted

Suggestions: Access to better technology, less time for conservation priorities, be organized up front

County: Rusk



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget

Did you have any changes to staff? Reassigned

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Increased

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Negative

Suggestions: Don't let it happen!

County: Sauk



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments?

Did you have any changes to staff?

Was there money saved? If so, how much?

Overall, was the move positive or negative?

Suggestions:

County: Sawyer



Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 4 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget

Did you have any changes to staff? Eliminated through attrition

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$150,000

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Co-location is a must

County: Shawano



Did you merge any departments? Yes - 15 years

How many departments combined? 4 Depts: Property Listing, Zoning & Sanitation Land Conservation

What was the primary reason for combining departments? More direction and have depts. work together since so many jobs cross over.

Did you have any changes to staff? Added 1. Cross trained staff. Reduced support staff by 1

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes, by staff, office supplies, office equipment, etc.

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive - one stop place to take care of things. Public really like it. Would not want it the old way again.

Suggestions: Planning Development and zoning committee together. Land Conservation separate committee. Wishes it was all one committee, would be easier, Encourage you to do one committee if they join, much easier. Just because you combine depts., doesn't mean the work goes away, others have to absorb it.

County: Sheboygan

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zon

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget/Efficiency

Did you have any changes to staff? Eliminated 1 position

Was there money saved? If so, how much?

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Neutral

Suggestions: Improved communications between departments, but inconvenienced the landowner

County: St. Croix

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 7 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Efficiency

Did you have any changes to staff? None

Was there money saved? If so, how much? No

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Neutral

Suggestions: Departments remained the same, elevated some to report directly to Administrator.

County: Trempealeau

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zon

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Retirements

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes 2 FTE

Was there money saved? If so, how much? \$43,234

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: There are counties who have set up separate divisions, within a consolidated department. You may want to look at those type of structures. By having separate divisions you will not lose sight of the purpose/goals of each department that was consolidated in the merger.

County: Walworth

Did you merge any departments? Yes - 2003

How many departments combined? 3 Depts: Planning, Zoning & Sanitation, and Land Conservation

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Driven by county board. Cost savings. Centralizing dept. Eliminate middle manager. One stop shot for public.

Did you have any changes to staff? New director, oversee the operation. Down sized from 33 to 17 now due to budget cuts and workloads

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Overall Positive, felt it was a loss of identity for depts., esp. Land Conservation at first. Public really like one stop shop.

Suggestions: Feels that is good to hire outside for a director then within because current workers have friends that may or may not be assets to the business, but kept in position. Were lots of middle mgt. positions before merging.

County: Washburn

Did you merge any departments? Yes – 2003, Unmerged in 2011

How many departments combined? Land and Water, Zoning, and Land Information

What was the primary reason for combining departments? People left, positions weren't being filled and to better serve the public.

Did you have any changes to staff? Pretty minor, some just picked up a few more duties. After unmerged. 1 mgt position was not needed. The work was getting done by individual dept services.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes, Approx. \$5,000-10,000 – supervisory position wasn't really needed, so salary decreased.

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Broke into separate depts. again 2 years ago, not in the loop

Suggestions: Each department seems fine working on their own again. Except now, with offices re-located, it has become a little more inconvenient for staff and public not to be in close proximity.

County: Washington

Did you merge any departments? Yes - 12-13 years ago

How many departments combined? 6 Depts: Adm. Dept, Golf & Park Dept, Land & Water Dept, Planning Dept, Land Use Dept

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget. Efficiency. More opportunities. More partnerships. Bring depts. together. Different areas doing the same job now can work together.

Did you have any changes to staff? Yes within divisions when parks retired they took on golf. Did not cut staff because of combining dept. but because of economy esp. in land-use dept. Shifted people around for efficiency, time and filled in when people retired, etc. Dept. head became division manager.

Was there money saved? If so, how much? Yes, not sure how much. Having depts. all in one place much more efficient. Less copies and office equipment. Rental space. Staff layoffs

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive. Works wonderful. More efficient. Improved communications

Suggestions: Took a long time to get where they are today. Bumpy road at first, works wonderful now, great partnerships. Dept. head came division mgr., not good at first, when he left things got much better. Brought all departments together, esp. when all working on same project. Parks Division was a great addition. Location of depts. all together is BEST, all in same office, public appreciated that. Combined several offices at first, then some broke away, then 6-7 years ago Land & Water Conservation joined them.

County: Waukesha

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? 6 Depts.

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Efficiency

Did you have any changes to staff? Added a Director

Was there money saved? If so, how much? No

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Positive

Suggestions: Be clear about up-front objectives. Leadership is critical

County: Waushara

Did you merge any departments? Yes

How many departments combined? LCD/Zoning

What was the primary reason for combining departments? Budget

Did you have any changes to staff? Realigned

Was there money saved? If so, how much? No

Overall, was the move positive or negative? Adapted

Suggestions: Don't let conservation office lose it's identity

Appendix G: Staff Survey Results

1. Which Department do you work in?

- Land & Water Conservation: 66.7%, (4) responses
- Zoning & Sanitation: 33.3% (2) responses

2. What benefits do you see for combining the (2) departments?

- "Only thing that I can see is having one committee board."
- "None."
- "Shard resources."
- "I really don't see the benefits. In my past years of service occasionally we talk with zoning about spreading spoil when a floodplain is involved. This can usually be handled with a phone call. I don't recall ever needing to work with sanitation or planning issues."
- "I don't see any benefits. These 2 departments do not do the same type of work and don't have much at all in common."
- "More efficient use of staff to handle combined workload. Could potentially save money by reducing staff numbers. Could potentially save money by reducing fleet vehicles. Improved communication between departments. Able to utilize unused space at LWCD."

3. What challenges do you see in combining the (2) departments?

- "Phone question from the public and the person be able to answer the question? Is the worker at the Land & Water being qualified to install a septic and be willing to get the license? For the WI Fund grant program the person that is going to the site be able to tell what type of category for the failure? Read legal description? Answer question on the maintenance letter? Looking up files for Plumber & Soil Tester and answering there question?"
- "Watering down our specialties by expecting us to do more with no additional resources."
- "Zoning and Sanitation is mostly enforcement of state statutes, Adm. Codes, land use issues per County ordinances and the issuing of citations for non-compliance. The Zoning and Sanitation Dept. is the local regulatory authority for sanitary issue (septic systems). The Conservation Dept. is geared for assisting with voluntary compliance rather than minatory enforcement. The question is can these two approaches exist together with in a single department or individual. Vehicle accesses could be a challenge as well scene Zoning department staff must consistently have a vehicle for septic system installation inspections for they are scheduled at set times by the installers and we are required to respond in a timely manner. There are times a vehicle is needed at a moment's notice do to a possible violation investigation or emergency sanitary issue. Shard vehicles may become a challenge."

- *"We already have a pretty high workload and fewer workers than we have had during most of my career here. Being combined with NRCS has been beneficial since we do work on the same environmental issues and have the same needs and access to information, programs and files. This is a benefit to the landowners we work with. We also work with their standards and engineering guidance for our work. I don't see the same correlation with Zoning, Sanitation and Planning."*
- *"... Sure we have places for individuals to sit, however the space may be an issue for all their file cabinets etc. will take up a significant amount of space. The NRCS Department, and with the LWCD Department have a full work load already, then to add the clientele of the additional 3 departments would not be a good situation. Cross training the technicians.....would that really be a good idea?"*
- *"Potential to lose DATCP staffing grant funds. One less supervisor to concentrate on topics specific to their departments. Short term confusion on location and responsibilities. Increase in initial training costs if cross training is desired. Building would need to be wired for internet if PZS programs cannot be installed on federal system. Potential appearance of changing from voluntary involvement in conservation to regulatory approach in Zoning. Loss of conservation focus if committee's merge. Poor employee morale could upset office cohesiveness."*

Note: An additional comment was made regarding a concern about working with a specific individual. That comment has been removed from this survey to protect the identity of that individual.

4. I believe a combined department will be beneficial to the users of those services.

- Strongly Disagree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Disagree: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Neutral: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Agree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

Comments:

- *"Because each department is so different in what they do, if we are doing our jobs correctly it shouldn't make any difference to the users of either departments services."*
- *"Not sure but I don't think it would be very beneficial."*
- *"Individuals are used to going to the Administration Building for the Planning, Zoning, and Sanitation issues."*

5. A combined department will be more efficient.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Neutral: 66.7%, (4) responses
- Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

Comments:

- "Maybe in combining office space and equipment but zoning dept. staff will still require their own vehicle."
- "I don't see how working with more issues would be more efficient and probably more regulatory. We currently have a lot of issues we are already dealing with and it's constantly changing."
- "Yes, there could be cross training involved to be more efficient, however the LWCD employees already have a large work load, then to learn something new and share the workload with sanitation would take time away from the work that they are already busy with."
- "In the short term, no, but eventually 2-3 years it has the potential to become more efficient as staff learns to work with each other."

6. A combined department will eventually be good for the staff.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 66.7%, (4) responses
- Neutral: 33.3%, (2) responses
- Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Strongly Agree: 0.0%, (0) responses

Comments:

- "It will take a long time to teacher someone on the zoning & sanitation procedures?"
- "It's hard to say; again we do very different things in different ways."
- "Most the people I have worked with for 15 yrs. And we understand each other"
- "We have a strong working relationship in our office and I think that there will be conflict with the combination of the staff."

7. If the (2) departments were to combine, I would look forward to the challenge of making it a success.

- Strongly Disagree: 0.0%, (0) responses
- Disagree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Neutral: 16.7%, (1) response
- Agree: 16.7%, (1) response
- Strongly Agree: 50.0%, (3) responses

Comments:

- "Work towards making it a success but not look forward to it."
- "If the departments were to combine I would make an effort to make it work. I love my job, and I don't want to jeopardize it."

8. Any other comments that you would like to share with the County Board.

- *"In my re-search on this issue which was based job descriptions, I discovered there are 15 counties out of 72 that have combined departments and of that 15 only 3 are cross training there staff. Of those 3 counties two have cross trained for zoning/conservation and one for sanitation/conservation. Therefor this leaves the questions is there a real need to combine, will it save the county money and will we still be able to provide the same level of services. I have some concerns but if the departments are combined I will do my best to make it a success."*
- *"I realize other counties have combined, however we have a very high agricultural workload and I view sanitation and zoning type issues to be more residential issues concerning new construction. Maybe I'm incorrect on this however my knowledge of the planning, zoning, and sanitation issues is very limited."*
- *"Lynda is an excellent supervisor and an excellent asset to the county and I am sure that she is capable of doing both jobs this is not going to be a money saving event, so I just don't understand why you just don't replace Terry? Does the county board know exactly what both departments do, and what their work load really is, and the clientele the both departments work with on a day to day basis? Is this department combination being pushed because the veterans department needs more space and this is the solution to combine the departments and locate them with the LWCD to allow the veterans department to expand into the planning/zoning/sanitation space in the Administration Building?"*