



American Bird Conservancy: Improving Oak Ecosystem Health in the Great Lakes Region in WI, IL – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2727 Land Management Plan and Process

Project Description:

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partnership that leverages capabilities and resources, targets assistance where it is most needed, cooperatively engages project partners, and works collaboratively with agriculture producers, forest land managers, and Tribes. The goal of this project is to restore, enhance, and protect oak ecosystems (forests, woodlands, and savannas) at a landscape scale to improve ecosystem health, connectivity, and biological diversity on private lands in regions of Wisconsin (WI) and Illinois (IL) where oak ecosystems historically thrived. Oak ecosystems are among the most highly-productive ecosystems in the world, but are rapidly declining and globally imperiled. Oaks are a keystone species, providing habitat structure and critical compositional features for 250+ species of birds, 500+ species of insects, and 500+ species of plants. Numerous State Wildlife Actions Plans' Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) are found in quality oak systems, including the project's primary focal species, Red-Headed Woodpecker and Cerulean Warbler, along with the federally endangered Rusty Patched Bumble Bee and Karner Blue Butterfly. Restoration potential for oak systems is high, with 70% of remaining oak acres in the project region under private ownership. Objectives of this project are to implement focal species best management practices (BMPs) on private lands through RCPP technical and financial assistance from 2023 through 2028.

Project Area:

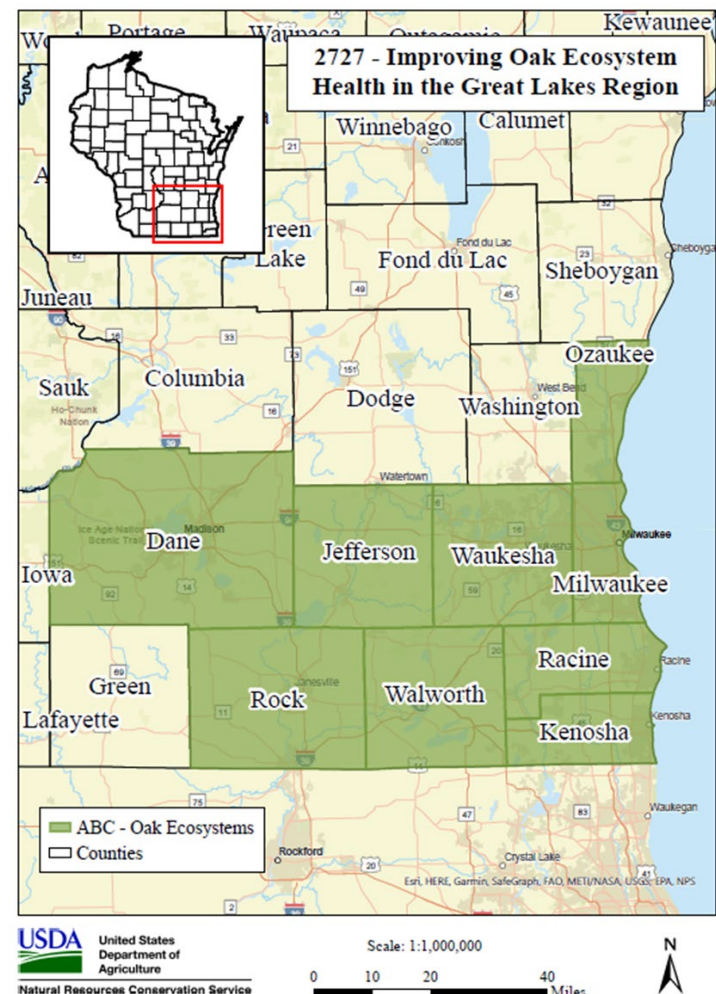
The project must intersect the boundary of the 2727 ABC Project Area and ranking will be set to implement these boundaries (larger map available below).

Eligible Land Uses:

Forest, Crop, Pasture, Associated Agricultural Land

Eligible Resource Concern Categories:

At least 1 of the resource concern categories below must be assessed in Conservation Assessment and Ranking Tool (CART) and show an improvement in the resource concern.





Soil (Soil Quality Limitations)
Soil (Wind & Water)
Water (Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss)
Water (Source water depletion)
Water (Storage and handling of pollutants)
Water (Weather resilience)
Plants (Degraded plant condition)
Plants (Fire management)
Animals (Terrestrial habitat)
Human (Long-term protection of land)

Habitat Suitability Indexes:

Unique [Habitat Suitability Indexes \(HSI\)](#) have been developed for oak savanna ecosystems.

Eligible Land Management Practices:

Code	Practice Name
106*	Forest Management Plan
160*	Prescribed Burning DIA
314	Brush Management
315	Herbaceous Weed Management
327	Conservation Cover
338	Prescribed Burning
342	Critical Area Planting
382	Fence
384	Woody Residue Treatment
394	Firebreak
420	Wildlife Habitat Planting
472	Access Control
484	Mulching
490	Tree/Shrub Site Prep
500	Obstruction Removal
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment
643	Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
666	Forest Stand Improvement

*106 Forest Management Plan and 160 Prescribed Burning Plan will be contracted separately from practice implementation contracts

Application Processing:

All 2018 Farm Bill (FB) RCPP applications will be continuously accepted, signup cut off dates will be publicly announced each year, and applications will be managed through Conservation Desktop (CD). On the NRCS-



CPA-1200 Conservation Program Application (version October 2025), RCPP must be selected in question 2 and 2a should be populated with "2727 ABC RCPP LM". Eligibility will need to be determined manually with the Farm Service Agency's Subsidiary Report. A project-level Adjusted Gross Income waiver is on file for this project and participants are not required to file or meet adjusted gross income eligibility policies.

Workload Prioritization:

A workload prioritization tool for this project has been developed and released in WI Bulletin 440-25-13 for Fiscal Year 2026.

Ranking Criteria

The ranking criteria is located in the project specific folder on RCPP page of the Wisconsin Programs SharePoint and may be updated each fiscal year.

RCPP-ABC Project Contacts:

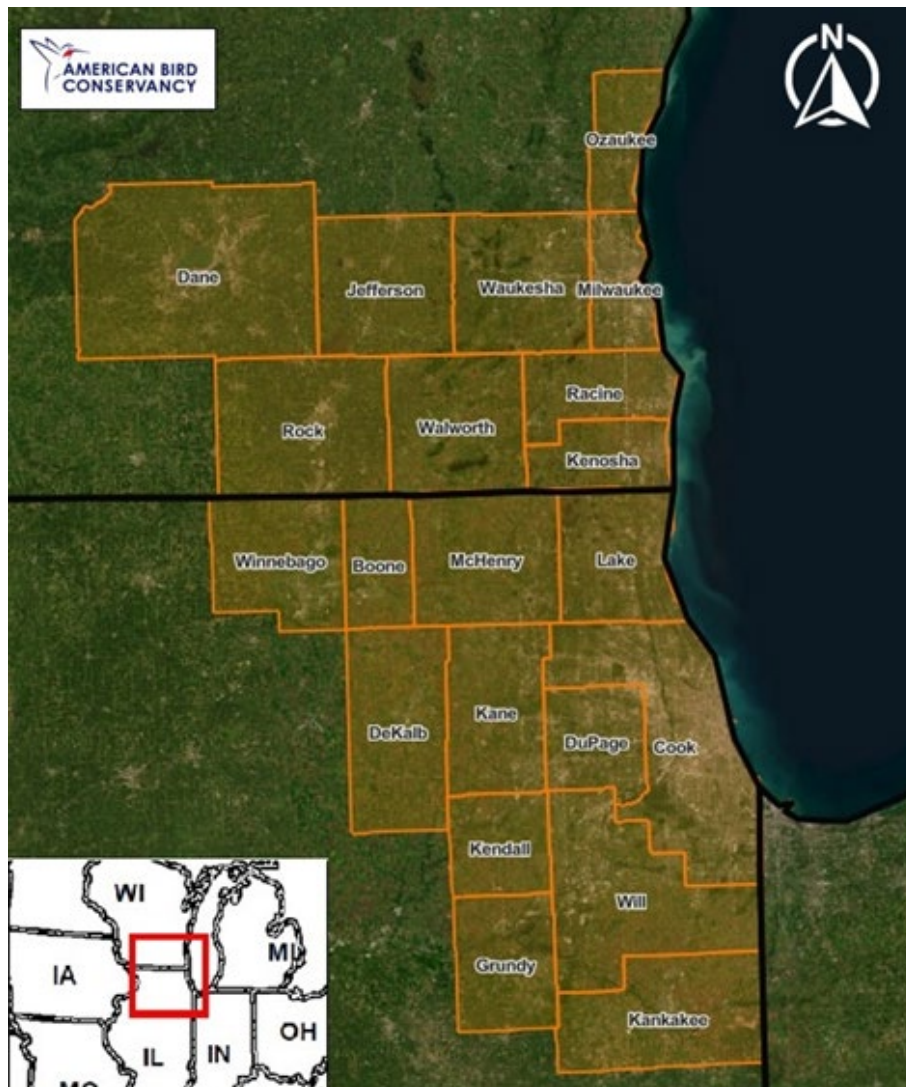
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Overall RCPP Project Boundary



Wisconsin RCPP project boundary (ranking applicability)

