

CHAPTER 5 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element

66.1001(2)(e) Wis. Stat.:

Agricultural, natural and cultural resources element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under s. 295.20 (2), parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.

Section 5.1 Introduction

The agricultural, natural and cultural resources of the Town of Carson are an important reason why most people choose to live here. Substantial natural woodlands and wetlands, varied and abundant wildlife and productive farms and farmland all come together to create a landscape rare in Wisconsin.

The residents of the Town of Carson recognize the value of their unique landscape and understand that it supports and sustains a way of life they are proud of. For those who choose to farm the land here, the community supports their efforts and works to minimize barriers that impede this economically viable industry.

Section 5.2 Agricultural Inventory

A. Agricultural Potential Based on Land Evaluation Site Assessment Rating (LE-SA)

The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative value of agricultural land resources. In basic terms, a given LESA model is created by defining and measuring two separate sets of factors. The first set, Land Evaluation, includes factors that measure the inherent soil-based qualities of land as they relate to agricultural suitability. The second set, Site Assessment, includes factors that are intended to measure social, economic, and geographic attributes that also contribute to the overall value of agricultural land. The site assessment factors are further evaluated in the Land Use element of this plan.

An LE rating was developed for use across all of Portage County. **Higher numbers mean greater value for agriculture.** LE ratings reflect this productivity potential, as well as the economic and environmental costs of producing a crop. Possible LE ratings range from 0 to 100. Many physical and chemical soil properties are considered in the LE rating, either directly or indirectly, including soil texture and rock fragments, slope, wetness and flooding, soil erodibility, climate, available water capacity, pH (alkalinity versus acidity), and permeability. Three soil property indexes were combined to produce the LE rating; prime farmland classification, land capability class – natural condition, and productivity index. All three of these indexes are published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

A SA (Site Assessment) rating was also developed for the Town of Carson. As with the LE rating, higher numbers mean a greater value for agriculture. The combined Land Evaluation factors are worth 100 points as are the combined Site Assessment factors. The LE and SA scores are added to yield a potential final score for each two acre block ranging between 0 and 200 points, with a score of 200 representing lands that are of the highest value for agriculture (excluding specialty crops such as cranberries). Communities will then determine an appropriate threshold for ranking lands recommended for protection (i.e. areas with a score higher than 150

and are greater than 40 contiguous acres). Weighting factors can be changed by each community to reflect its own priorities. See Appendix E for a complete explanation of this system.

The Town of Carson has decided to use the LESA model as an advisory tool to help identify productive agricultural areas in the community.

B. Highly Productive Agricultural Soils

Highly productive agricultural soils in the Town of Carson have been identified, with the assistance of the County Conservationist, based on highest productivity and lowest degree of limitations for farming (Map 5.1 Highly Productive Agricultural Soils). Slopes greater than 6% were excluded from the “highly productive” designation (due to severe hazard for water or wind erosion), along with small parcels and stony, rough, and eroded sites. Highly Productive Soils in Carson include:

- Billett sandy loam, 0-2% slopes
- Richford loamy sand, 0-2% slope
- Richford loamy sand, 2-6% slope
- Rosholt loam, 2-6% slope
- Wyocena sandy loam, 2-6% slope

C. Farming Systems, Demographics, and Land Tenure

The agricultural landscape of the Town of Carson can best be described a “coming together” of farming systems. The Town is located near the two major farm regions in Wisconsin. The first and most prominent is the dairy region. In Wisconsin, dairying is most concentrated in a belt that begins near Hudson (St. Croix County), heads east to Wausau and Green Bay (Brown County), then turns southwest through Fond du Lac, Madison and ends near Dubuque (Iowa County). Wisconsin Department of Agriculture 2002 permit information list thirty-nine (39) active grade-A dairy farms operating in the Town of Carson. To the south in Linwood, there are six (6) dairy farms, and to the north in Eau Claire, there are twenty-one (21) dairy farms.

The second farming region in the county is that of fresh vegetable production. The irrigated sands of the “golden sands” region of Wisconsin lie between Amherst and Stevens Point and go south into Waushara and Adams Counties. The lands west of the Wisconsin River, which includes the Towns of Carson, Eau Claire, and Linwood, are the primary areas in Portage County where irrigation is not needed because of the shallower depth to groundwater and heavier soils. Carson is in the center of this large non-irrigated plain and there are a number of producers who have scattered vegetable operations within the Town.

The amount of land dedicated to agricultural production does change regularly from year to year. In 2000, the Portage County Planning and Zoning Office analyzed aerial photography for the Town of Carson to identify active farmland within the Community. The land in farms was broken down by presence of irrigation, 0 acres; use for row crops or hay, 14,278 acres; and permanent pasture, 254 acres. Total agricultural acres identified for 2000 were 14,532.

There were 53 persons employed in an agriculturally related field in the Town of Carson in 2010 (Table 1.9, Issues and Opportunities section). This represented 9.1% of employment for the Town. This is down slightly from 2000 of 83 persons and 11% and substantially from the 1980 figure of 147 persons (26.1%). Decreasing farm employment is not a unique trend by any means. Farm numbers are down, while acreage per farm is up. Farm consolidation is a common practice in this industry.

Map 5.1 Highly Productive Agricultural Soils

D. Farm Economy and Infrastructure

Because of the lack of farm economy information available at the town level, a detailed discussion of the farm economy at the town level is not practical. Please see the complete discussion of the Portage County farm economy in the Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resource element of the Portage County Comprehensive Plan.

E. Other Local Influences on Agriculture

The completion of the U.S. Highway 10 upgrade may subject certain areas of the Town to increased development pressure. An increased number of non farm residences might increase the potential for conflict, increase the assessed value of non-farm lands, and most importantly, increase the sale price per acre of land beyond the point of being economically viable for purchase as farmland.

F. Legislative Influences on Agriculture

Wisconsin Right-to-Farm Law (State Statute 823.08)

Dating back to the early 1980's, the State of Wisconsin saw the need to protect farmers from lawsuits pertaining to everyday operations and created State Statute 823.08, commonly referred to as the "Right-to-Farm" law. The Right-to-Farm law was substantially revised in 1995 in an effort to thwart lawsuits against farmers dealing with standard farming operations and consequences such as odor, noise, dust, flies and slow-moving vehicles. As part of the law, the Legislature notes that local units of government are in the best position to handle possible farm and non-farm conflicts through zoning and other land use controls.

Wisconsin Act 377 – Implements of Husbandry (2014)

As the size of modern agricultural equipment continues to grow, so have the misconception within the agricultural community that implements of husbandry were exempt from any size and weight regulations. In short, Act 377 clarifies the definition of implements of husbandry, defines the new term "agricultural commercial vehicles," creates an increased weight limitation (essentially 15%) for implements of husbandry and agricultural commercial motor vehicles (Ag-CMV), and creates a new 'no-fee permit' that can be issued by Department of Transportation and local units of government.

Through Act 377, implements of husbandry are defined as – A self-propelled or towed vehicle that is manufactured, designed, or reconstructed to be used and that is exclusively used in the conduct of agricultural operations. These include, but are not limited to, farm tractors; self-propelled combines, forage harvesters, and pesticide or fertilizer equipment. By developing a definition Ag-CMVs allows these vehicles to comply with federal regulations while still receiving the same benefits of exclusive agricultural use. An Ag-CMV refers to a commercial vehicle to which all of the following apply: 1) the vehicle is substantially designed for agricultural use, 2) the vehicle is designed for highway use and is manufactured for Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Certification, 3) the vehicle is used exclusively for agricultural operations, and 4) the vehicle directly engages in harvesting farm products, applying fertilizer, spray or seeds to a farm field or distributes feed to livestock.

G. Agricultural Programs

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The Conservation Reserve Program, administered through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Through CRP, one can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible farmland. Participants enroll in CRP for 10 to 15 years.

Environmental Quality Incentives Programs (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program. It supports production agriculture and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

EQIP may pay up to 75 percent of the costs of eligible conservation practices. Incentive payments may be made to encourage a farmer to adopt land management practices, such as nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, and wildlife habitat management.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program to restore and protect wetlands on private property. It is an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to restore wetlands that have been drained for agriculture.

Landowners who choose to participate in WRP may sell a conservation easement or enter into a cost-share restoration agreement with USDA to restore and protect wetlands. The landowner voluntarily limits future use of the land, yet retains private ownership. The landowner and NRCS develop a plan for the restoration and maintenance of the wetland.

The program offers landowners three options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements of a minimum 10- year duration

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides both technical assistance and cost sharing to help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

Landowners agree to prepare and implement a wildlife habitat development plan. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance to implement the wildlife habitat restoration practices.

Section 5.3 Agricultural Issues

The following agricultural issues were identified during the planning process:

- How can zoning accurately reflect what is truly productive or prime ag land ?– exclusive ag zoning should be reserved strictly for prime ag land
- How should the Town address the potential health hazard from abandoned manure pits?
- How can agricultural practices exist in harmony with residential development?
- Use value assessment shifts tax burden to residential and commercial uses.
- Potential issue of dealing with manure from large animal operations.
- How can rural character be protected in the Town?
- Individuals parking on cul-de-sacs, primarily while hunting and fishing, block access for farm equipment.
- The weight and width of modern farm equipment contributes to the deterioration of public roads within the Town
- Continued rises in the cost of agricultural land and fuel

Section 5.4 Agricultural Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal A Agricultural practices are unencumbered by development.

Objective A.1 Encourage the use of buffers between agricultural and residential uses.

Objective A.2 The Town’s Comprehensive Plan is used as a tool to help educate the public about local agricultural activities.

Policy A.1 Encourage non-farm development in areas away from intensive agricultural activities, in order to minimize farm – non-farm conflicts.

Policy A.2 Recommend density based development as a means of buffering against agricultural uses for lands removed from A-1 zoning.

Policy A.3 Promote Right to Farm laws.

Goal B Preserve productive agricultural lands in the Town.

Objective B.1 Identify productive agricultural areas.

Objective B.2 Encourage practices that protect air, soil, water, and wildlife resources.

Policy B.1 Use Exclusive Agricultural Zoning to protect productive lands where such lands are used mainly for agricultural production, using the Land Evaluation Site Assessment system as a guide.

Section 5.5 Natural Resources Inventory

Natural resources in the Town serve as the foundation for residents physical and economic well being – from groundwater quality to land suitability for agricultural, residential, or commercial development. According to the results of the 2001 Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Survey, Town residents favored managing the natural resources that support and sustain them.

This section will describe the existing natural resources inventory and state the issues, goals, objectives, and policies that were adopted by the Town of Carson Plan Commission and Town Board.

A. Geomorphology

The present Portage County landscape primarily reflects the last or Wisconsin stage of the Pleistocene or glacial epoch (Holt, 1965). The glacial ice transported large amounts of rock debris known as drift. The drift is called till if deposited directly by the ice, and outwash if placed by glacial melt water.

Glacial presence is less noticeable in the drift-crystalline rock province in the northwestern portion of the County, which includes the Town of Carson. Although this area is mapped as part of the driftless or unglaciated area of Wisconsin, there are thin, heterogeneous till and outwash deposits of clay, silt, sand, and gravel from an earlier glacial period. The average thickness is only four feet. The topography is controlled primarily by the shallow granitic bedrock, and soil properties reflect the underlying bedrock residuum and the loamy, silty nature of the unconsolidated materials.

Areas identified as alluvium are post-glacial deposits of materials eroded from uplands and accumulated in lower areas such as marshes (organic-rich clay, silt, sand, and peat) and stream valleys (well-sorted silt, sand, and gravel). These alluvial deposits range from a few feet to over 60 feet in thickness.

The topography of the Town is generally flat to slightly rolling and includes many lowland wet areas. The elevation ranges from 1,210 feet above sea level in the northwest part of the Town to 1,075 feet above sea level in the southeast corner (Map 5.2). The depth to bedrock is generally shallow throughout the Town, ranging from 0 – 35 feet.

B. Soils

Soils in the Town can be grouped into five soil associations (see Map 5.3), as follows:

- **Meadland-Rozeville-Dolph association:** Well-drained to somewhat poorly drained, nearly level to gently sloping soils that formed in loamy and silty deposits and the underlying loamy residuum from igneous rocks. These soils are found in the southern and western half of the Town and are used primarily for crops and dairy farming. Meadland and Dolph soils are saturated with water at a depth of less than 3 feet during wet periods.
- **Point-Dancy-Mosinee association:** Well-drained to somewhat poorly drained, nearly level to gently sloping soils that formed in loamy deposits and the underlying loamy residuum from igneous rocks. These soils are found in the northeastern portion of the Town and are used primarily as pasture or woodland. Point soils are saturated with water at a depth of less than 3 feet and Dancy soils at a depth of less than 1 foot during periods of wetness.

- Roscommon-Meehan-Markey association: Somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, nearly level soils that formed in deep sandy deposits or, in places, in organic deposits that overlie the sand. These soils are found in the southeast portion of the Town and are used primarily as pasture or woodland. Ponding is common in undrained areas and saturation occurs at a depth of less than 3 feet during periods of wetness.
- Alluvial land, wet-Dunnville association: Well drained to very poorly drained, nearly level soils that formed in river or stream transported deposits. These soils are found along the Wisconsin River where most of the alluvial land is subject to flooding, while areas of Dunnville soils not subject to flooding have moderate limitations for septic drainfields and basements.
- Markey-Seeleyville-Cathro association: Very poorly drained, nearly level soils that formed in organic deposits over sandy and loamy deposits. These soils are found in the central and northeast portions of the Town and are used primarily for pasture or wildlife habitat. This association has very severe limitations for septic drainfields and basements.

Soil testing by a certified soil tester is strongly recommended for more detailed, site specific information.

C. Surface Water, Wetlands, and Floodplain

The major surface water bodies that are present in the Town of Carson include the Wisconsin River and Mill Creek. The Wisconsin River flows from the north to the south-southeast and serves as the eastern boundary of the Town. Mill Creek enters the Town from the west and meanders east approximately 7 miles where it then flows to the south into the Town of Linwood.

Other surface water features in the Town include: Hayden Creek, which flows into the Town from Wood County and converges with Mill Creek at STH 34 and Bear Creek, which originates in the southwest portion of the Town and flows south into Wood County. There are also other intermittent and ephemeral waterways that drain into Mill Creek. The majority of the Town is located in the Mill Creek watershed and areas surrounding the creek are subject to frequent flooding from major storm events and melt water from the spring thaw. A watershed can be defined as interconnected areas of land draining from surrounding ridge tops to a common point such as a lake or stream junction with a neighboring land area.

Wetlands are an important part of the watershed, as they act as a filter system for pollutants, nutrients, and sediments, along with serving as buffers for shore lands and providing essential wildlife habitat, flood control and groundwater recharge. Wetlands within the Town of Carson (Map 5.4) include three general types: forested, scrub or shrub, and emergent/wet meadow.

- Forested wetlands are the predominant type. This includes bogs and forested floodplain complexes that are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as, tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, and silver maple. These wetlands are located primarily along the edges of the Mill Creek and in the Paul J. Olsen Wildlife Area and Fogarty Marsh in the central part of the Town.
- Scrub/shrub wetlands are the second most abundant type. These wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by wood shrubs and small trees such as tag aster, bog birch, willow and dogwood. These are also found primarily in the central part of the Town, with inclusions scattered throughout the northeast part of Carson.
- Emergent/wet meadow, the third most numerous type of wetland within Carson. This type consists of areas that may have saturated soils more often than having standing water. Vegetation includes sedges, grasses and reeds as dominant plants, but may also include

blue flag iris, milkweed, sneezeweed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster. These types of wetlands are found throughout the Town, primarily along intermittent and ephemeral drainage ways.

A floodplain is defined as that which has been or may be covered by floodwater during the regional flood. The flood plain includes the floodway and flood fringe areas. A 100-year Flood is defined as a flood event having a one percent chance of reaching the 100-year flood elevation in any given year. Contrary to popular belief, it is not a flood occurring once every 100 years. A 100-Year floodplain then, is the area adjoining a river, stream, or watercourse covered by water in the event of a 100-year flood.

Floodplains provide many benefits including: natural flood and erosion control, water quality maintenance, groundwater recharge, and fish and wildlife habitat. Some of these areas are also desirable for residential development due to aesthetic reasons, and agricultural development due to the presence of nutrient rich soils. If development in these areas increases, the benefits listed above will decrease. Floodplains in Carson are illustrated on Map 5.5.

Map 5.2 Topography

Map 5.3 General Soils Associations

Map 5.4 Wetlands

Map 5.5 Floodplain

D. Groundwater (Map 5.6)

The Town of Carson is located in a geologic province known as the drift-crystalline rock province. The drift-crystalline rock province is considerably different from the rest of the County in that the basement granitic bedrock is close to the surface, and the unconsolidated aquifers above it are very limited. The depth to bedrock is generally less than 20 feet, and the depth to groundwater is generally less than 10 feet. Seasonally, depths to groundwater can decrease to less than one foot.

All Town residential water use comes from groundwater sources, therefore, protection of this resource is important. Given the very thin or nonexistent unsaturated zone, there exists little or no second line defense against pollutants regardless of the nature of the subsurface materials.

Although some of the soils ranked moderate to good in pollution attenuation, this area of the County should be considered vulnerable overall given the shallow depth to groundwater and bedrock.

Potential pumping yield rates for groundwater are generally less than or equal to 20 gallons per minute throughout the Town. This rate is low when compared to areas east of the Wisconsin River where rates can exceed 1000 gallons per minute.

1. Atrazine Prohibition Areas

The US Environmental Protection Agency is researching the health effects of atrazine in water. Drinking water that contains atrazine will not cause an immediate sickness or health problems (acute toxicity). However, consuming low levels of atrazine over time may cause health problems (chronic toxicity). The EPA is also concerned that atrazine may be an endocrine disruptor which can cause unintentional hormone-like activity in the body.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is responsible for protecting Wisconsin's groundwater from contamination by pesticides and fertilizers. Their authority to restrict the use of a pesticide that is contaminating groundwater at levels above health-based standards is found in the Wisconsin Groundwater Law, Chapter 160 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and by department rule in ATCP 31, Groundwater Protection Program.

The rules for restricting the use of atrazine and other pesticides in Wisconsin are part of ATCP 30 - Pesticide Product Restrictions and the county maps showing the location of the prohibition areas can also be found in the rule in ATCP 30 - Appendix A.

Atrazine has not been detected above the Enforcement Standard of 3 micrograms per liter in wells within the Town of Carson and because of this; no prohibition area has been defined within the community.

E. Wildlife Habitat and Forested Areas

When people think about wildlife, birds, fish, and mammals most likely come to mind. It is important, however, to consider all organisms that make up an ecosystem in order for that system to continue providing the maximum benefit to humans and the environment. Town residents recognize the fact that human beings play a role in protecting or restoring, as well as, degrading or destroying wildlife and its habitat. They also recognize that it will be very difficult to preserve all ecosystems in the Town from human encroachment or interaction, therefore, it is the desire of residents to protect wildlife habitat where practicable.

The biggest threats to wildlife are loss of habitat quality and quantity. These threats can be attributed primarily to fragmentation, invasive species, and pollution. **Fragmentation** refers to the loss of large, contiguous sections of land through subdivision into smaller parts. These subdivisions can lead to an alteration and possible degradation of the native plant and animal communities. **Invasive species** (both plant and animal) tend to out compete or prey on native species also altering the native ecosystem. **Pollution** can lead to habitat degradation and cause birth defects and increased mortality rates in animal species. Habitat areas are important for providing food and cover for nesting, brooding, and sheltering. Farmland is one type of habitat that also provides food, as well as, travel corridors between wetlands and woodlands.

Woodlands or forested lands comprise 25% of the land area in Carson (Map 5.7) while wetlands make up 25%. According to 2001 County survey data, 75% of respondents felt that an effort should be made to identify and protect woodlands, and 68% felt the same about wetlands and floodplains. Woodlands that exist in the Town are primarily due to an inability to sustain successful agricultural practices. Loss of these habitat types can threaten the viability of certain species.

One option open to all private landowners owning ten or more acres of woodlands is the Managed Forest Law Program. The MFL program is intended to foster timber production on private forests while promoting other benefits that forested lands provide. Participants in this program have the option to choose a 25 or 50 year contract period and pay property taxes at a reduced rate on enrolled lands. A portion of the difference in property taxes is recouped by the state at the time of a timber harvest when a yield tax is imposed based on the volume of timber removed. For more information regarding specific requirements and how to enroll in this program, contact the WI Department of Natural Resources.

1. Threatened and Endangered Species

Known rare and endangered animal species identified by the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) that are located within the Town of Carson, Linwood, Hull, and Village of Junction City areas include: Bald Eagle, Osprey, Arctic Shrew, Water Shrew, Greater Prairie Chicken, and Franklin's Ground Squirrel. Rare and endangered plant types include: Northern Mesic Forest, Southern Dry-Mesic Forest, Northern Sedge Meadow, and Shrub-Carr wetland communities. These elements should be taken into consideration when development and protection measures are considered. A detailed description of rare and endangered plants and animals can be obtained from the WI DNR.

Map 5.6 Groundwater Flow

Map 5.7 Forested Land

F. Air Quality

The following information comes from the WI DNR and the Environmental Protection Agency:

A few common air pollutants are found all over the United States. These pollutants can injure health, harm the environment and cause property damage. The Environmental Protection Agency calls these pollutants **criteria air pollutants** because the agency has regulated them by first developing health-based **criteria** (science-based guidelines) as the basis for setting permissible levels. These pollutants include: ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and lead. One set of limits (**primary standard**) is designed to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly; another set of limits (**secondary standard**) is intended to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. A geographic area that meets or does better than the primary standard is called an **attainment area**; areas that don't meet the primary standard are called **nonattainment areas**.

All of Portage County, including Carson, is listed as an attainment area by the WI DNR.

G. Non-Metallic Mining

The glacial and geologic history of Portage County has made conditions suitable for certain types of non-metallic mining. Along the moraines in the eastern third of the County, glacial deposits have resulted in some lands that are desirable for gravel and aggregate extraction. This is in contrast with lands west of the Wisconsin River where soils are heavier and have a higher clay content.

Although there are no significant gravel deposits in Carson, there are areas in the Town where clay extraction, used for landfill lining material, are favorable. There currently is one inactive clay extraction site located in the southwest part of Carson. Extraction has slowed since US Highway 10 between Stevens Point and Marshfield was completed.

Section 5.6 Natural Resource Issues

The following issues were recognized through the planning process:

- There may be a need for residences to treat water for hardness or iron contents.
- Some areas of the Town are losing oaks to oak wilt. How can the Town encourage proper silvicultural practices without increasing the risk of loss to other residents?
- There is a desire to protect Mill Creek and other marsh areas. What can be done to properly manage these resources and minimize degradation?
- Deer along road are not being picked up. What can be done to ensure a more timely method of disposing of animal carcasses along roadways?
- More lands are being closed (access to private land) to the public.

Section 5.7 Natural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal A Identify, manage, preserve, and protect natural resources throughout the Town of Carson.

- Objective A.1 Encourage proper silvicultural practices to prevent the spread of diseases and invasive species such as oak wilt, garlic mustard, and buckthorn.
- Objective A.2 Promote the implementation of the County's Draft Groundwater Mitigation Ordinance.
- Objective A.3 The public has input into decisions regarding natural resource issues.

Policy A.1 Apply the new Conservancy and Rural Limited zoning districts to allow some development and farming practices in specified lands designated as natural areas.

Goal B Municipal boards and the public are made aware of natural resource issues.

Objective B.1 Local units of government work together to define and develop appropriate public access to natural resources.

Section 5.8 Cultural Resources

How can you know where you're going if you don't know where you've been? Cultural and historic resources often help link the past with the present and can give a community a sense of place or identity. These resources can include historic buildings and structures along with ancient and archeological sites.

Burial sites are one example of a resource that can add to a community's sense of history as well as provide a great deal of genealogical information. Formally catalogued burial sites are protected from disturbance in Wisconsin and are given tax treatment equal to that of operating cemeteries.

Information regarding cultural and historic resources in the Town is constrained to limited financial and human resources. This section will provide goals and policies that promote the effective management of historic and cultural resources.

A. Cultural and Historic Resources Inventory

A wide range of historic properties have been documented that help create Wisconsin's distinct cultural landscape. Descriptions of existing locations are identified on the list of historic places by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Keep in mind many of the properties included in this inventory are privately owned and not necessarily open to the public, so please respect the rights of private property owners. At this time, there are thirteen listings in Carson, which include buildings, barns, school houses, and a bridge. Among the more conspicuous sites are:

Oak Hill School - a one-six room brick school house constructed in 1910 located on Oak Hill Rd.

St. Bartholomew's Church – a gothic revival style brick church constructed in 1910 located on Cty Rd M.

Another source of information comes from the National and State Register of Historic Places. There are currently fourteen sites listed throughout Portage County, however, none of them are located in the Town.

There are two cemeteries located in the Town: St. Bartholomew Cemetery, located near St. Bartholomew's Church on Cty Rd M; and Pierce Grover Burial Plot, located east of Cty Rd O, south of Junction City.

B. Cultural Resource Programs

At the State level, the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board (WHRAB) works in association with the Wisconsin Historical Society. The Board's activity falls primarily into three areas: it provides guidance and assistance to archives and records management programs in Wisconsin, promotes the value of historical records as keys to our cultural heritage and works through partnerships with statewide organizations whose purpose and goals support that end, and to bring federal grant funds to Wisconsin for improving access and preservation of historical records.

Section 5.9 Cultural Resource Issues

The following issues or concerns were identified through the planning process:

- What can be done to develop a history of the Town of Carson?

Section 5.10 Cultural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal A Encourage the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources.

- Objective A.1 Work with Portage County Historical Society to maintain a written history of the Town.