

## Conservation Practices to Reduce Nutrient Losses

Mike Stanek, NRCS - Madison, WI

Mike Stanek, NRCS State Agronomist, will discuss Wisconsin agricultural conservation practices used to prevent the losses of phosphorous and nitrogen to surface and groundwater. NRCS maintains a suite of conservation practices designed to reduce, trap, and prevent sediment from reaching surface waters. Mike will discuss some of their benefits, effectiveness, and limitations. He will review the tools used to measure P loss reduction. Nitrogen, however, is a different and complex beast. The major resource concern is nitrogen loss via nitrates to groundwater and surface water; both outlets eventually become drinking water. The nitrogen cycle will be discussed, as well as best management practices NRCS recommends for minimizing nitrate loss to groundwater.



Mike Stanek is the State Agronomist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. He earned a B.S. in Resource Management and Soils from UW-Stevens Point and an M.S. in Agriculture from Washington State University. His past career experiences include 19 years as a Resource Conservationist for the Sauk County Land Conservation Department, UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, and USDA-Ag Research Service Management Agronomist. Mike provides technical leadership on the agronomic phases of conservation programs. He trains field staff on soil erosion, pest management, and the use of conservation tools and models such as RUSLE2, SnapPlus, WinPST, and WEPP. He and his family enjoy raising beef, hogs, and chickens in the rural hills near Baraboo. Mike's farming experience comes first-hand by being raised on a family dairy farm in Vernon County where milking cows, making hay, and spreading plenty of manure was just an average day.