

Saving our LAND WATER HERITAGE

Sample Press Release

WEST BEND—Voters in Washington County will go to the polls on Tuesday, April 3, to decide whether to invest in the preservation of farmlands, water recharge tracts and natural areas.

The Washington County board voted January 9 to put the preservation issue on the ballot by a vote of 19-10.

The Land Conservation Partnership, which has been promoting the preservation initiative, has launched a campaign to educate voters about the reasons for the county program. The proposal would commit at least \$800,000 a year in county funds for a period of ten years to preservation. It would require an equal amount of matching dollars from other sources, such as state and federal funds or private donations.

At the heart of the program will be the purchase of development rights (PDR) from willing sellers. A PDR is an easement that is placed permanently on the land being sold so that it is protected from development forever.

The PDR device has been used in counties across the United States and has been used several times to preserve farm and natural areas in Washington County. The seller receives the difference between the value of the land for farming and the value of the land in the marketplace for development. The landowner receives no more or no less than he or she could have received from a private buyer.

Donations and volunteer help are being sought by an organization called Washington County Citizens for Farmland and Natural Areas. Bob Retko, chairman of the organization said, “We need the help of hundreds of people across the county to make sure the voters understand the issue and its importance for the future of our county.”

If you'd like to make a contribution to the campaign to pass this valuable program, please make your check to “Washington County Citizens for Farmland & Natural Areas,” and send to Bill Neureuther, Treasurer, Washington County Citizens for Farmland & Natural Areas, 1351 Oak Dr., Hubertus, WI, 53033. If you want to volunteer your time to help with the campaign, please contact our volunteer coordinator Alice Nixon at 262-707-0359 or nixon@hnet.net. Your support is greatly appreciated. You may want to use a copy of this article in a newsletter for your organization. For an electronic version, contact Sue Millin at voteeyes@lcpwc.org.

IT'S RIGHT FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY

Paid for by Washington County Citizens for Farmland & Natural Areas, William Neureuther, Treasurer