

**Wisconsin Land+Water Conservation
2024 Outstanding Conservation Employee Award
Nomination Information**

Nominee: Robert “Bob” Kaner
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Phone: 715-231-6536

Award Category: Technician/Planner/Project Manager/GIS Specialist/Agronomist

County: Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division
Title: Conservation Planner/Engineering Tech
Years of Service: 39 (Start date: February 4, 1985)

Education and background, past and present career responsibilities, level of professional knowledge and ability: Bob grew up on a small dairy farm in southern Dunn County and graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire. His ability to design and implement conservation practices was mainly learned “on the job” and his career in conservation was largely influenced by two people; Jim Forester, long time County Conservationist with Dunn County and Erling Wheeler, SCS Engineering Technician.

Nominator: Chase Cummings
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Summary: It is my pleasure to nominate Bob Kaner for the 2024 Outstanding Technician/Planner/Project Manager/GIS Specialist/Agronomist Award. Bob began his career in conservation with Dunn County in 1985. He has built a reputation of trust and respect among his peers and the many landowners and contractors he has worked with for almost four decades. His dedication and hard work has contributed to a legacy of conservation on the Dunn County landscape. It is for this and his many other qualities that make him deserving of this recognition and award.

Award Criteria/Guidelines:

- *Ways in which he/she performs normal duties with exceptional quality.*
- Bob is diligent in seeing his project to the end. He balances project requirements and landowner perspectives to achieve a quality outcome. He is very conscientious about delivering a product that meets the needs of the landowner, contractor and any additional approving engineers. Bob has developed consistent and clear expectations and understanding, when working with landowners and

contractors. This quality and approach has served him very well over the years and has resulted in long lasting trusted relationships with the people he works with.

- *Outstanding contributions to better public understanding of natural resource conservation and the goals of the LWCD.*

Bob is receptive of public perspectives and facilitates a calm and patient approach to resolving issues or explaining conservation goals. He also provides a perspective, based on years of experience, that helps others understand the overall reason for a project or why the LWCD exists. A perspective that can boil down the complexities of our world to a basic understanding for all to consider and apply in their own work. Bob has also been directly involved in planning and implementing all four of Dunn County's Land and Water Resource Management Plans. He has helped strengthen partnerships and built lasting relationships with farmers, citizens and staff from other agencies.

- *Providing outstanding personal assistance to the LWCD.*

Bob is committed to the advancement of the LWCD's goals and responsibilities. He is very willing to assist local organizations with activities that may or may not be related to the LWCD. He supports relationship building within the community, which many times will have a positive effect on the LWCD.

- *Exceptional service in furthering the cause of the LWCD, strengthening conservation partnerships and assistance the programs of the LWCD.* Bob grew up on a farm in southern Dunn County where he developed an exceptional work ethic and great understanding of agriculture. He evaluates every task or project on whether it deserves his time and whether it is a good place for tax payer money. This approach ensures an effective and efficient implementation of projects that benefit the citizens of Dunn County.

- *Ways in which he/she contributes to the association, such as serving on a WI Land+Water committee, presenting at the annual conference, and/or other examples of support for conservation professionals.* I'm uncertain to the level of participation in WLWCA/WALCE committees, conferences, etc. over his 30+ years. But he certainly attends and contributes in many social ways at meetings and conferences. He has also presented at many Area Winter Technician meetings. He is not afraid to speak up to either clarify or get clarity on a subject, which in turn benefits others in attendance. His conservation mindedness and experience in the industry provides plenty of opportunities to pass along institutional knowledge.

- *Other special attributes or characteristics.*

Bob is a team player and has the ability to bring people together to discuss a particular issue which helps everyone build a shared understanding of the issue and reduces the hypothetical scenarios that may distract from or deter a meaningful project. He is sympathetic and supportive for the needs of others.

- *Letters of recommendation from cooperating agencies considered.*

None