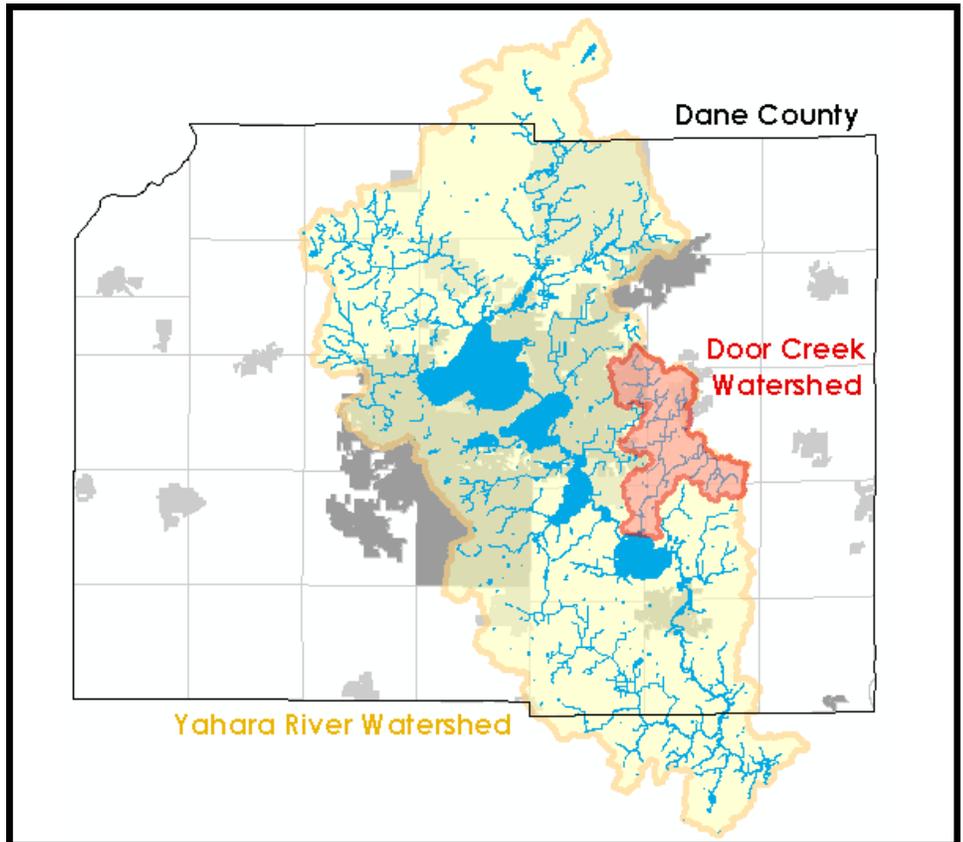


Door Creek Watershed



Door Creek Setting and Location

Door Creek, a tributary to the Yahara River entering at Lake Kegonsa, begins as a small stream in the southeast corner of the Town of Burke and flows south 12.7 miles to Lake Kegonsa, the most southern of the Yahara River Chain of Lakes. Door Creek and its tributaries drain 29.5 square miles (18,880 acres) of rolling agricultural land in the drumlin-marsh area of eastern Dane County. All of the land that drains to the creek is called its *watershed*.

Hydrology, Geology and Soil Characteristics

The Door Creek Watershed's unique landscape was formed approximately 15,000 years ago during the last glaciation period. Upland areas in the northern and eastern portions of the watershed include many small drumlin hills (glacial landforms), which created an extensive system of interconnected wetlands with poorly defined drainage. Slopes in the watershed range from zero to two percent.

The watershed is comprised primarily of three soil groupings: McHenry-Kidder, Ringwood-Plano-Griswold, and Rodman-Fox-Casco that are well-drained, meaning that water moves through the soil easily, but not rapidly. Another soil type found in the watershed is Houghton muck, a very deep, poorly drained soil.

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Land Cover and Land Use

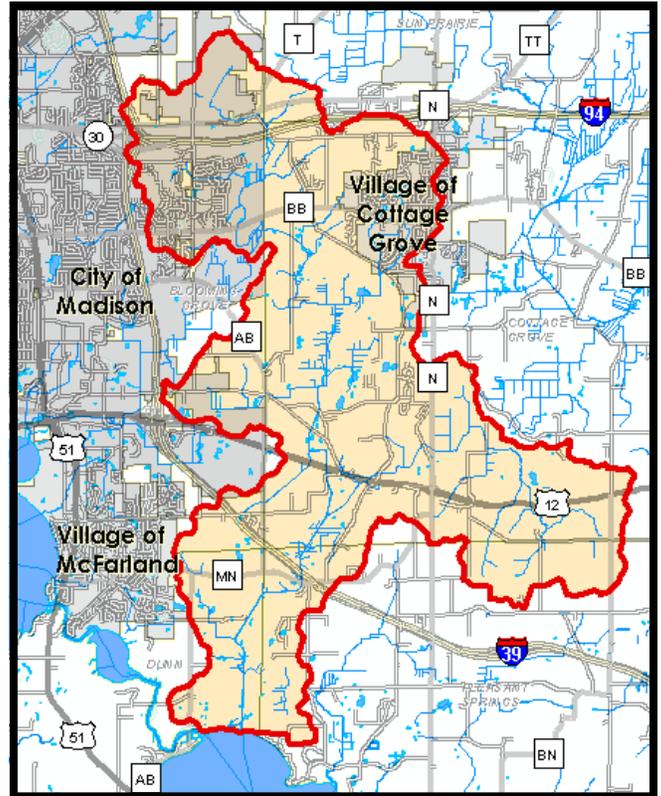
The predominant land cover/use within the watershed is agriculture, accounting for more than 47% of the total watershed area. The dominant agricultural practice is cash grain farming consisting of corn and soybean rotations, however some livestock operations are present in the watershed with typical cropping rotations of corn, soybeans, hay, and wheat. The second largest land cover/use within the watershed consists of around 2,700 acres of wetlands, 13% of the total area.

Watershed Management Action Plan

Water quality in Door Creek is poor with some stretches having four to six feet of silt and less than two feet of water. The Creek also has the second-highest phosphorus loading from agricultural land in the larger Yahara watershed. Due to the high sediment and nutrient runoff, Dane County Land and Water Resources Department staff have developed a watershed management plan for Door Creek with the goals of (1) delisting Door Creek from the State Impaired Waters List, (2)

Reducing 5,700 pounds (about 38%) of phosphorus runoff from agricultural and urban sources in order to meet Door Creek's phosphorus water quality criterion, and (3) maintaining Door Creek's natural community classification.

Staff will provide technical assistance to help agricultural producers identify structural and management practices that can be implemented, with financial assistance if eligible, to help meet these goals. Below are some examples of practices that can help improve water quality and soil health in the Door Creek watershed. Contact the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department for more information.



Harvestable Buffer



A harvestable buffer is a strip of grass that can be harvested and utilized while also providing an environmental benefit by capturing sediment, nutrients and pesticides.

Photo: Scott Hennelly - WI Land+Water

Residue Management/ Cover Crops



Residue management/cover crops protect soil between commodity crops and can reduce soil erosion and nutrient leaching, conserve soil moisture, and improve soil health.

Photo: Dane County UW-Extension

Grassed Waterway



Grass waterways are downhill grassed channels designed to drain runoff water from adjacent cropland and prevent soil erosion that would have occurred from these concentrated flows.