

## **Wisconsin County Surveyors Association (WCSA) Annual Report – December 2023:**

**COUNTY SURVEYOR STATUS:** The current status of County Surveyors in Wisconsin is as follows: There are 60 Counties with County Surveyors in Wisconsin – 31 serving on a full-time basis, 28 serving on a part-time basis. 13 counties choose to function without a County Surveyor. Three Counties still elect their County Surveyor. They are Portage, Sauk, and Vilas. However, Sauk County is in the process of going from elected to appointed.

**MEETINGS:** In addition to an annual membership meeting held at the Kalahari Resort in January, the WCSA Board of Directors met 4 times this year, a meeting at Wade Pettitt's house that included a tour of his maple syrup operation, a hybrid meeting in Neillsville and 2 hybrid meetings in Wisconsin Rapids. While these quarterly meetings technically constitute a Board of Directors meeting, we have anywhere between 20 and 35 people attend. There were educational segments with representatives from The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (Mick Heberlein) and The State Cartographer's Office (Dave Vogel) in attendance. We are seeing not only surveyors, but many others from the land information community (GIS Mappers, property listers, vendors, etc.) taking part in our meetings.

**GPS on Benchmarks:** The National Geodetic Survey (NGS) deadline to include GPS on Benchmark observations as part of the release of the 2022 datum was September 30, 2023. Several County Surveyors along with a handful of private entities worked diligently to collect as many observations as possible on horizontal and vertical control stations across the state. These observations had to be a minimum of 4 hours long and each monument was required to have 2 observations since 2014 to be included in the 2022 datum. There were about 15,000 NGS benchmarks in Wisconsin and about 60.8% of the NGS marks were observed and about 99.5% of the Horizontal Wisconsin Height Modernization Program (WI-HMP) Stations were observed. Thank you to everyone who helped!

**PLSS Workgroup:** The Wisconsin PLSS Forum titled "*The PLSS: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*" that was scheduled for April 28, 2020, in Marinette, Wisconsin was not able to take place once again in 2023. Plans are coming together to have it in Marinette in 2024. A date has been set and it will take place at the Best Western Riverfront Inn on Thursday, April 18, 2024.

**Cell Phone Apps White Paper:** The Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors (WSLS) Board of Directors in conjunction with the WCSA Board of Directors approved a white paper for publication for awareness on cell phone applications, that they are not to be used as a surveying tool. Cell phones are not nearly as accurate as land surveying equipment. Land surveyors still are required to obtain the proper education and training on land surveying, using land surveying equipment, and the process of doing an accurate survey.

**Spring Green Monument:** The WCSA Board of Directors approved a \$1,000 donation for the protection of the Spring Green Monument.

**Wisconsin Counties Association Booth:** This year we had a booth at the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Conference. Laurence Johns and Dave Tlusty worked in the booth answering questions from attendees and explained the importance of having a County Surveyor. Dave gave away 25 survey mark posts as a prize. Thank you to Laurence and Dave for all their work!

**WCSA Summary:** We are making progress on the PLSS Forum once again. Thank you to Dan Frick for taking the lead on getting this back on track. We as an organization continue to reach out to let people know about the importance of having a county surveyor. This past year we reached out to Oneida County, Langlade County, Winnebago County, and Iowa County who have vacant positions to let them know the importance of having a County Surveyor.

Respectfully submitted: Ryan Duckart – WCSA President