

Bird City Wisconsin

Basic Application for Recognition

As _____ President _____ of the **village**/city/town/county of _____ Plover _____, Wisconsin,
(Title: mayor, or other leading official) **Items in red are new initiatives for 2014 application.**

I herewith make application for this community to be officially recognized and designated as a Bird City Wisconsin, having achieved the criteria set forth by the Bird City organization. Our community has met at least 7 of the 22 criteria below, including 3 from Category 1 and 1 from each of the other four categories.

Basic Requirements

(Please check all that apply and provide appropriate documentation. This application needs to be submitted in both paper and electronic form, including any additional narrative. The "Other" item under each category is designed to allow applicants to demonstrate an important municipal accomplishment that Bird City Wisconsin's criteria otherwise overlook; to use this option, please include a narrative attachment and any other supplemental information.)

Category 1: Creation and Protection of Habitat

X A. Demonstrate with an attachment that your community is in compliance with Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" law for land use planning and resource management.

An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Plover, Portage Co., Wisconsin, was adopted by the Village Board on April 6, 2005, and further modifications were made in 2012.

X B. Attach a summary of bird monitoring results and/or other data obtained from researchers or local volunteers in the local park system.

For the past **12** years, ALAS has developed and monitored an Eastern Bluebird nest box trail (ABT). In that time, the trail has grown from **89** to **1,270** boxes and from **1** to **75** monitors (**Document #1**). For the last four years it has been the largest and most productive trail in Wisconsin and is now thought to be the largest bluebird trail in the US. For the 2013 nesting season, this trail produced **5,938** songbirds, including **4,230** bluebirds. In the **12** years of its existence, ALAS has produced approximately **52,252** songbirds, including **40,614** bluebirds.

For the 2012 season In the Village of Plover, a total of **140** nest boxes were checked by 8 monitors (Jim & Barb Gifford, Kent Hall, Bill & Jan Seybold, Joe Schultz and Bill & Jill Ziehr). Four Village parks were included in this monitoring. A total of **447** bluebirds and another **251** songbirds (wrens, chickadees & Tree Swallows) were produced from these boxes.

A key to the success of the ABT is its weekly monitoring program. Monitors check all boxes and turn the data in for a weekly report prepared by Kent D. Hall (**Document #1**). This approach yields several dividends including: 1) a comparison of what is happening on the trail and a chance to educate all monitors 2) a chance to address problems throughout the trail and 3) maintenance of high motivation and morale for the monitors. The ABT has been the focal point of great publicity and has helped develop a conservation conscience among dozens of people, especially children.

C. Attach ordinance or other evidence that existing bird habitat has legal protection.

X D. Document that current community planning seeks to provide additional bird habitat.

The Little Plover River (LPR) has been a continuing source of concern for the past 10 years. In 2013 the organization, American Rivers, named it the **4th most endangered River in North America**. In 2005 & '06 portions of the river went dry. The potential exists for this Class 1 trout stream to be permanently damaged. The Village of Plover has been involved in the conservation of the LPR since problems arose with the stream. The Village has moved most of its water pumping from ½ mile to 2 miles away from the stream (Well #3) to prevent drawing ground water from the reservoir feeding the LPR. In addition, the Village has purchased 140 acres (**Document #2** shows purchase agreements) immediately adjacent to the river and plans to make a park out of it (**Document #2**). This land purchase will reduce the amount of water drawn from ground water near the property. In addition, the Village has

a long term plan to purchase additional properties adjacent to the LPR. The last page of [Document #2](#) shows a 70 acre parcel that now has an "Option to Purchase". The Village intends to transfer the option to a different entity, hopefully the WDNR so it can be used for wetland restoration purposes to afford further protection for the headwaters of the LPR.

The LPR conservation efforts have the potential to be helped considerably by a study being undertaken by the WDNR, U.S. Geological Survey and the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey. Their plan is to improve their management tools by building computer models to better understand the complex groundwater-surface water interactions and how different management alternatives affect groundwater and surface water flows. In addition, the WDNR is in the early stages of developing a strategic analysis for the Central Wisconsin Sand and Gravel Aquifer that will collect, analyze and report the latest scientific, ecological, and socio-economic information relating to groundwater and surface water in an eight-county area ([Document #3](#)).

The LPR now has a "Friends" group which promotes the health and safety of the LPR ([Document #4](#)). It promotes not only conservation measures for the River, but educational opportunities for two elementary schools in Plover (Plover/Whiting ES and Roosevelt ES—over 1,000 students served to date). The Aldo Leopold Audubon Society has made \$300 grants for the annual "Little Plover River Appreciation Day" in each of the last two years. The educational component deals mainly with aquatic-oriented activities, but the LPR is an exceptional area for migrating & nesting passerines. The conservation measures of the Friends of the LPR greatly help birdlife along the LPR. The last two pages of [Document #4](#) provide a thorough and succinct summary of the LPR history for the past 17 years.

- E.** Attach a copy of local ordinance to demonstrate that the community does not restrict "wild" or natural lawns and landscaping.
- F.** Show how the community offers the public information on control and removal of invasive species.
- G.** Attach a state publication showing that the community contains a segment of the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail or a designated Important Bird Area.
- H.** Demonstrate through public documents or publicity that the local Chamber of Commerce (or a similar group) takes an active role in the planning process for protecting and enlarging favorable bird habitat.
- I.** OTHER: Demonstrate in an attached narrative.

Category 2: Participation in Programs Promoting Effective Community Forest Management

- A.** Enclose a copy of the "Tree City, USA" award if your community participates in this program.

[Document #5](#) has the most recent letter for recognizing the Village of Plover as a Tree City USA (2013). The Village expects to receive the recognition letter for 2014, soon. The Village of Plover has been a "Tree City" for 20 years.

Also, [Document #5](#) shows the Village of Plover celebrating Arbor Day and the announcement of the receipt of the Bird City Wisconsin recognition.

- B.** OTHER: Demonstrate in an attached narrative.

Category 3: Limiting or Removing Hazards to Birds

- A.** Attach evidence or provide community web link if your community has an educational program to control free-roaming cats and/or actively publicizes the "Cats Indoors!" program.

The Village of Plover website (ploverwi.gov) has the web links to the American Bird Conservancy and its [Cat's Indoors Campaign](#). In addition, the ABC brochure, [Cats, Birds & You](#), is being distributed by the Village to the Portage County Humane Society, Oakview Medical Center, Inc., and Woodhaven Animal Health veterinary clinic. These three sites will use 100-200 of these brochures/year.

- B.** Demonstrate that your community provides property owners with information on how to protect birds from window-strikes.

The Village of Plover website has a web link to ["Window Alert"](#). The Window Alert website demonstrates what to use and how to use window decals to prevent window collisions.

- C.** OTHER: Demonstrate in an attached narrative.

The Plover website also has the web links to both Bird City Wisconsin and the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society.

Category 4: Public Education

- A. Demonstrate that schools in your community participate in Flying WILD, helping ensure that the nation's students are knowledgeable about the conservation needs of migratory and other birds.
- B. Attach newsletter or web links to show how your community provides information to property owners on methods to create and enhance backyard habitat for birds.
- C. Provide web links your community offers to other organizations with information on backyard habitat programs.
- D. Demonstrate that your community is represented in at least one bird monitoring program such as the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, or Swift Night Out.

For 54 years the Village of Plover has participated in the Stevens Point Christmas Count ([Document #6](#)). Major portions of Sector 5 & 6 lie within the Village limits and a small bit of the Village of Plover is also in Sector 4. A total of 49 species and 7,983 individuals (2nd highest on count) were found on the 2013 Stevens Point CBC. New high counts were recorded for these species: Cedar Waxwing, Horned Lark and Mourning Dove. There were no new species for the 54th count year but rare species observed included two Tufted Titmice and single individuals of Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Sharp-shinned Hawk, No. Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk (not seen since 1976), American Kestrel, Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglet. Thirty three people participated in this year's count.

Sector 5 has been monitored for 16 consecutive years by Kent D. Hall and other birding volunteers and careful records have been kept for both the Stevens Point CBC and Sector 5 for this time span. During that time, 59 species have been recorded in Sector #5. In 2013, 27 species and 1,351 individuals (2nd highest in history) were recorded for Sector #5. In 2013, Sector 5 had the following new species: Red-shouldered Hawk and Tufted Titmice. New high counts for Sector 5 was recorded for the House Sparrow (152). Sector #5 was the only Sector to record the American Kestrel, Red-shouldered Hawk and Tufted Titmouse. Sector #5 had the highest individual counts for the following species: Cooper's Hawk, Canada Goose, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin (Tie), Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal and House Finch.

- E. Demonstrate that your community sponsors an annual bird festival.
- F. Illustrate how your community has a program that involves schools, garden clubs, or other organizations in bird conservation activities.
- G. OTHER: Demonstrate in an attached narrative.

The Village of Plover provides support for the environmental school for the Stevens Point School System, the Boston School Forest = BSF ([Document #7](#)). The BSF Area totals 120 acres, the northern 40 of which is owned by the Village of Plover. The Village allows the BSF students to use its property for educational purposes.

Document #7 shows a summary of the 222 programs presented in the 2012-2013 school year. School programs served 6,192 Individuals and another 1,909 individuals from the community used the facility, for a total of 8,101 served.

The BSF is unique in that it has a solar array installed on the south edge of the property. This array is producing about 1/3 of the energy being used by the BSF ([Document #7](#)).

Category 5: Community celebration of International Migratory Bird Day

- Attach a copy of both your community's official resolution recognizing IMBD and either a copy of a program or plans for your local IMBD celebration. A sample resolution can be found at www.birdcitywisconsin.org/resolution.

Attached is the IMBD Resolution approved by the Village of Plover on January 15, 2014 ([Document #8](#)). The Village of Plover will hold the Int. Migratory Bird Day in conjunction with that of Stevens Point. The IMBD will be held on May 3, 2014, at Iverson Park in Stevens Point. A special ceremony will be held prior to birding tours. Birding tours will be conducted by 5 expert birders at the Park (a destination of the Central Sands Prairie Regional Trail of the Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail). Afterwards, the group will go to the Lost Creek Wetlands, NE of Stevens Point.

Signature

Title

Date

Please type or print contact information for the parks, forestry, environmental, or other community official who is the best follow-up contact to deal with questions regarding this application:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____ City, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Conservation projects benefit from strong partnerships. Please identify any community partners you are working with and a contact person (and phone number or e-mail) with that group:

Aldo Leopold Audubon Society Kent D. Hall 200 Pine Bluff Rd., Stevens Point, WI 54482 (715) 344-8081/ kentsue@charter.net

Mail a completed hard copy application with narrative and requested documentation to:

Carl Schwartz, Project Coordinator, Bird City Wisconsin, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd., Bayside, WI 53217

Email the electronic format to cschwartz3@wi.rr.com

Note: Bird City's recognition year runs from April 1 to March 31. Applications are reviewed during three periods each year. The current application period closes Nov. 1, 2011. Communities approved in this review period will be awarded Bird City Wisconsin recognition through March 31, 2013. Applications will not be processed without the requested documentation and attachments. Also, please enclose a nonrefundable application fee of \$100 in a check made payable to Milwaukee Audubon Society/Bird City Wisconsin.

When a community is initially certified as a Bird City Wisconsin, the following items will be provided **free of charge** to publicly celebrate that recognition:

- Two 22"x 25" street signs with the Bird City Wisconsin emblem;
- A 3' x 5' all-weather Bird City flag that can be flown at a prominent civic location;
- A recognition plaque suitable for display at the municipal center;
- A prominent announcement on the BirdCityWisconsin.org web site;
- An electronic Bird City Wisconsin logo/emblem that can be used on appropriate municipal web sites and printed materials, as well as the web sites of partner organizations and local businesses; and
- Press releases to appropriate media.