LITTLE PLOVER RIVER MODEL AND WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

With financial support from DNR, the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and the United States Geological Survey constructed a groundwater flow model for the Little Plover River watershed in Portage County. This model is a scientific tool for understanding the complexities of geology, groundwater recharge and discharge, surface-water flow, well development and use and water balance. The model simulates the complex temporal and spatial interactions among streamflow, pumping, and climate and provides users "what-if" evaluations of possible decisions involving management of water use or land-use changes. The Little Plover River Basin was chosen for this pilot study because the river has been the focus of recent management concern and because a great deal of hydrogeologic data already exists for this area. Learn more at: https://fyi.uwex.edu/littleplovermodel/files/2014/08/Little-Plover-River-handout.pdf.

Beginning in 2017 stakeholders including the Village of Plover and agricultural producers in conjunction with DNR, consultants, and the Wisconsin Wetland Association, formed the Little Plover River Watershed Enhancement project with the goal of achieving sustained flow and aquatic health within the river. The stakeholders are utilizing the groundwater flow model as one tool to assist with establishing land and water best management practices. Learn more about the collaborative restoration effort at https://www.ploverwi.gov/328/Little-Plover-River-Watershed-Enhancemen.

The Village of Plover received a DNR grant in FY23 to continue improvements to the Little Plover River. Through this grant, the Village of Plover, NRCS, Portage Co. and other partners will fill a ditch and restore a wetland. This project will contribute to continuing efforts in the watershed to restore wetlands, thereby improving river baseflow, and reduce surface water runoff, decreasing the flashiness of the river. These efforts to restore the river hydrology are intended to improve habitat in the river.