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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Nature Conservancy applauds conservation focus in Dane County budget**

*Focus on land management and restoration, support for cover crops, also central to TNC's work*

**Sept. 30, 2019 | MADISON, WI:**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is thrilled to see several crucial conservation initiatives included in Dane County Executive Joe Parisi's 2020 budget proposal and applauds the County for its continued focus on sustainability and adapting to a changing climate.

The budget unveiled today creates new funding for land management and restoration efforts that will not only help Dane County prevent flooding, but also significantly lower the amount of nutrient runoff that enters and pollutes our lakes and streams. Investments in land protection and wetland restoration provide economic and health benefits down the line, as fewer properties are damaged by flooding and clean water is more available for drinking and recreation.

The budget doubles funding for the continuous cover program, which directly supports farmers who are interested in implementing sustainable practices on their land.

TNC is proud to support the efforts of farmer-led groups through the Dairy Strong Sustainability Alliance, including Yahara Pride Farms here in Dane County, who are also working to strengthen on-farm conservation practices, build soil health, and help protect groundwater and water quality in area lakes and streams. For example, many farmers plant cover crops to have green plants on their fields all year long. Cover crops help farmers prevent soil erosion and nutrient runoff into our waters. The added funding in this budget will complement the soil health efforts of our farmers who help put food on all our tables.

We look forward to continuing to build partnerships with Executive Parisi, Dane County, and other stakeholders in our ongoing, complementary efforts. TNC again thanks the County for its leadership in recognizing that, as our climate changes and extreme weather events become more common, nature can be part of the solution in helping us address these challenges.