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Monday, January 28, 2019

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Land Information Program Wins State Surveying Award

MADISON – Department of Administration (DOA) Secretary Joel Brennan today announced that the DOA Wisconsin Land Information Program received the Wisconsin County Surveyors Association’s (WCSA) 2019 Friend of Wisconsin Land Surveying Award for their contributions to modernizing local land records and supporting land surveying throughout Wisconsin.

“Governor Evers’ Executive Order #2 recognized the valuable benefits state employees provide the residents and colleagues across our state. The recognition from WCSA underlines the significant contributions the Wisconsin Land Information Program makes to help advance the Public Land Survey System. I look forward to continuing to elevate the work of the talented employees of the Department of Administration,” Secretary Brennan said.

Since its creation in 1989, the Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) has provided grants to county governments to modernize local land records, including many activities related to land surveying and mapping. In 2018, the Wisconsin Land Information Program awarded \$6.2 million to county governments.

In the 19th century, Wisconsin and much of the territory of the United States was surveyed by the U.S. General Land Office. These surveys, which established the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) of land division, are still used today for land transactions. Many of the markers, known as corner monuments, which were placed in the ground 150 years ago are gone. Among their responsibilities, county surveyors are responsible for remonumentation, which involves restoring and protecting corner monuments of the Public Land Survey System. While much work remains, counties across the state have been rebuilding this infrastructure in Wisconsin, which increases mapping accuracy of land holdings and legal descriptions.

In his nomination, Eau Claire County Surveyor Ron Roth wrote that “As the WLIP began to recognize and understand the value and importance of the Public Land Survey System, more grant funds were allocated for that purpose. In their wisdom, they saw the diverse status of PLSS progress in all 72 counties and provided grants to advance PLSS remonumentation efforts in counties where they were needed most. Remonumentation work across the state has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years and the Wisconsin Land Information Program has been a key factor in that growth. Landowners across the state are benefiting greatly through PLSS remonumentation grants from the WLIP.”

WLIP Program Manager Mike Friis accepted the award at the annual WCSA meeting on January 25th in the Wisconsin Dells. The meeting is part of the 70th Annual Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors’ Institute.

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