Conservation Corner

*Conservation Corner is a weekly article produced by the Forest County Land &Water Conservation Department. For more information contact Steve Kircher, County Conservationist-Land Information/GIS Director at 715-478-1387 or by e-mail at* *lcc@co.forest.wi.us**.*

By now, you should have received your Census 2020 forms. The U.S. Census Bureau continues to carefully monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and follow the guidance of federal, state and local health authorities. They are adjusting some operations as outlined below with two key principles in mind: protecting the health and safety of staff and the public and fulfilling the statutory requirement to deliver the 2020 Census counts to the President on schedule.

As of today, over 5 million have responded online to the 2020 Census. Currently, the planned completion date for data collectionfor the 2020 Census is **July 31, 2020**, however, that date can and will be adjusted if necessary as the situation evolves in order to achieve a complete and accurate count.

College students living in on-campus housing are counted through their university as part of our Group Quarters Operation, which counts all students living in university owned housing. In addition to college dormitories, the Group Quarters Operation also includes places like nursing homes, group homes, halfway houses and prisons.

The Early Nonresponse Follow-up operation is also being delayed. In this operation, census takers begin following up with households that haven’t responded yet around some colleges and universities. By starting early, they can count households in areas with off-campus housing before the end of the spring semester when students may leave for another residence. They are delaying the start of this effort **from April 9 to April 23**.

The Census Bureau is also making changes to its paid media campaign, earned media efforts, and partnership outreach efforts to adapt to changing conditions while continuing to promote self-response. The key message right now for anyone with questions about how COVID-19 will affect the 2020 Census: **It has never been easier to respond on your own, whether online, over the phone or by mail—all without having to meet a census taker.**