

Juneau County Ag and Natural Resource Chronology

1810

- Green Bay fur trader Louis Beupre winters in Juneau County; first recorded contact between Whites and Indians here.

1820s

- Jacques Porlier, of Green Bay, send traders to winter with the Winnebago on the Lemonweir.

1826

- Amable Grignon, of Green Bay, has trading post at Grignon's Bend on the Wisconsin River in future Town of Armenia.

1827

- Daniel Whitney and twenty-two Stockbridge Indians cut logs and make shingles at the mouth of the Yellow River.

1828

- Frank Provonsal, Sr., opens trading post on the Wisconsin North of Petenwell Rock.
- U.S. Army Lieutenant Jefferson Davis cuts timber for Fort Winnebago at the mouth of the Lemonweir River.

1836

- Frank Provonsal, Jr., opens a trading post three miles upstream from the mouth of the Lemonweir.
- Wisconsin Territory formed; Juneau part of Crawford County.

1837

- Winnebago cede last remnants of their land in Wisconsin, including Juneau County.
- Samuel B. Pilkington and John T. Kingston endure bitter winter weather to explore the Lemonweir River Valley.

1838

- Robert V. Allen, Amasa Wilson and C.B. Smith become the first American settlers in Juneau County when they erect a logging shanty at the Big Eddy near Wisconsin Dells.

1842

- Mauston begins when Hiram Elmore, James A. McNeil and W. McAllister build a log dam and sawmill on the south bank of the Lemonweir Rapids.
- Amasa Wilson and C. B. Smith log the Lemonweir Valley in central Juneau County.
- George Willard cuts timber on the Baraboo River near what will become Wonewoc and drives logs downstream to the Wisconsin.
- First Juneau County wheat crop recorded in the Wonewoc area

1843

- New Lisbon begins when Amasa Wilson and C.B. Smith build a log boom, dam and sawmill on the Lemonweir.
- Esquire Rice and John T. Kingston explore the Yellow River for pine timber.

1844

- Abijah Ayers starts Juneau's first farm in the Town of Fountain
- Juneau is part of new county of Sauk with the county seat at Baraboo.

1845

- First pine log cut on the Yellow River

1848

- Menominee cede all their land in Wisconsin, including all of Juneau County north of the Lemonweir.
- New county of Adams formed from territory that will become southern Juneau.
- John Werner, John Kingston and Joe Gill explore the Yellow River, claim land and prepare to build a sawmill at what will become Necedah.

1849

- Necedah begins when first log drive on the Yellow brings timber to the new mill there.
- Town of Lemonweir organized; includes all of then Adams County.

1850

- County population (Adams and Juneau) – 187
- First state-chartered road in Juneau runs from the Dells to New Lisbon and La Crosse.
- E.S. Miner builds first farm house in Juneau County at Necedah
- William Stewart, James Coddington and John Green start Stewart's Settlement south of Mauston
- Suldal community begins when ten Norwegian families settle at Norwegian Gap.

1851

- Wonewoc begins when George Willard builds sawmill
- First county school opens in Stewart's Settlement.
- First church holds service at Stewart's Settlement.

1853

- Adams County boundaries change; now include all of what will become Juneau and Adams Counties.
- First threshing machine in Juneau used on the farms of John Green and William Stewart in Stewart's Settlement.

1855

- First Juneau County Fair held at Mauston

1857

- Juneau County formed out of western Adams County
- The La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad crosses Juneau County.

1858

- 5,000 workers harvest 28,000 bushels of cranberries in Juneau.

1860

- John Werner Jr. empowered to contract for first drainage of marshes in northern Juneau County.
- By 1860 75% of Wonewoc farmers had no more than 22 acres under plow, nearly all kept a cow or two and a couple of pigs.

1866

- 92,180 pounds of hops worth \$46,900 shipped from Mauston.

1869

- 30,000 bushels of wild cranberries shipped from county marshes.

1871

- “Ike” Alsbacher of Mauston harvests 21 acres of tobacco.
- The last great nesting of the passenger pigeon, 136 million estimated birds, covering 850 square miles including parts of Juneau, Sauk, Columbia and virtually all of Adams Co.

1872

- First Baraboo Valley wheat crop shipped out of Wonewoc.

1873

- Ira H. Stewart, S.W. Smith, George Curtis, William Hale and F. Waldo open Juneau’s first cheese factory in Lindina.

1881

- Necedah logging industry at its peak; 65 million board feet cut.

1884

- Iron and copper mining on Mile Bluff begins and ends.

1887

- Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association organized at New Lisbon.

1892

- Lyman Lumber Company runs last log drive on the Yellow.

1898

- Closing of last Necedah saw mill ends the pioneer logging era in Juneau County.

1899

- Mather ships two carloads of sphagnum moss to South Africa.

1901

- Juneau County, Little Yellow, Orange, and Dandy Creek Drainage Districts organized. In total, over 160,000 acres were organized into drainage districts.

1904

- I.T. Eakins builds Juneau County’s first round barn south of Lyndon Station.

1907

- State legislature declares county taxpayers liable for defaulted drainage district bonds.

1909

- County Drainage Committee reports that “expense of...Drainage Districts...is too large.”

1910

- Potato raising and shipping reached it’s peak in Necedah between 1910 to 1915.

1916

- Wiregrass is harvested and shipped by rail to Oshkosh

1917

- County Board resolves to hire a County Agricultural Agent.

1921

- Ten rail car loads of salted cucumbers are shipped from Mauston.

1922

- Alfalfa and soybean trial plots established with help from the Juneau County UW-Extension Office

1924

- 515 acres of alfalfa planted in the county.

1934

- The most widespread sandstorm hit the region May 9-10. It carried 300 million tons of dirt 1,400 miles, one year prior to the more well know Oklahoma “dust bowl”.

1935

- 150,000 acre game preserve drainage proposed for northwestern Juneau County.

1936

- Rural Resettlement Administration designated 96 farmers in northern Juneau as eligible for resettlement. By the late 1930’s, federal and state governments had purchased over 80,000 acres of land for conservation acres.

1939

- Necedah National Wildlife Refuge officially created.
- Prairie Chicken population estimated at 500 birds.

1947

- Construction of Petenwell Dam begins.

1948

- Construction of Castle Rock Dam begins.

1957

- Juneau County Hosts “Wisconsin Farm Progress Days”

1978

- Commercial ginseng garden established by David Hitchcock

This chronology has been compiled by Juneau County Extension Agent Craig Saxe. More detailed information is available from a slide presentation and document prepared by Craig Saxe entitled “Agriculture and Natural Resource History in the Juneau County area”. A major reference source was the Juneau County Historical Society’s book entitled: “Juneau County, The First 100 years”. (Last updated 2-12-2009)