RIDGE AND VALLEY

STORY OF NOW



WATER

We have the best groundwater in Wisconsin - safe, clean, drinkable Our good water quality supports recreation based tourism (trout fishing) We have problems with flooding causing erosion, nutrient and soil loss Fewer cattle grazing are affecting the soil's ability to retain water Concerns about drinking water are forcing farmers to go deeper when they dig wells

Awareness of water's role in unique and fragile environment

FARMING

LESS VARIETY IN FARM TYPES & SIZES

More big farms

Fewer dairy farms

Less cattle grazing

Land is expensive

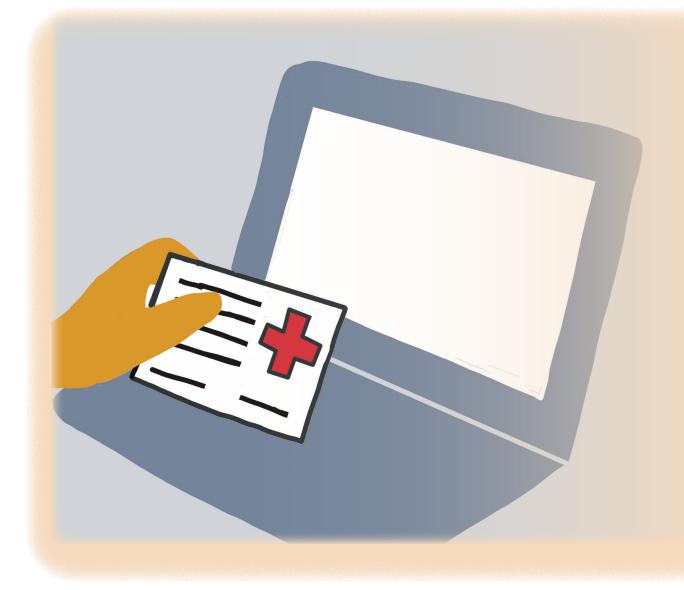
Topography is ideal for grazing and hard for cropping

DEEP ROOTEDNESS TO THE AREA

Longstanding, multi-generational connection to land Co-op model valued including Westby, Organic Valley, Co-op Store

Longing for farm succession





HEALTH

Off-farm employment is needed to access health insurance (and financially support farm operations)

Variety of accessible healthcare options exist

More isolation, less opportunity to interact because of fewer school, church, and community gathering places; COVID worsened isolation

Need to consider public health

COMMUNITY

Divisions between newcomers and long-standing members

Lacking a sense of community cohesiveness

People returning to area of their age

People returning to area as they age

Desire for jobs, schools, outdoor recreation, and services

that attract and keep people in the community

Metro residents buying land for recreation

