

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

3/25/14, Barron Co Government Center, Barron, WI

Present at the meeting: Ron Verdon-TMLIA; Dan Prestebak- Dunn Co. Land Conservation; Tim Jergenson-UW-Extension Barron Co; Tyler Gruetzmacher-Barron County Conservationist; Ruth King, Paul LaLiberte, Buzz Sorge-WDNR; Julia Olmstead-UW-Extension Farmer Led Council project leader; Dan Zerr-UW-Extension Natural Resource Educator

Updates: Everyone shared any new information/developments pertinent to the Red Cedar River Watershed (RCRW) efforts.

- Buzz: Red Cedar River Conference (held on 3/13 in Menomonie) was a great success and Buzz thought that the farmer-led presentations really raised the consciousness about civic engagement.
- Julia: McKnight Foundation is happy with how the grant money for the farmer-led efforts is being spent, and with how the project is going. The breakout presentation that Julia led with farmers at the Red Cedar Conference went well and the farmers involved seemed to enjoy the experience.
- Paul: The workings of a new initiative to help fund farmer-led efforts around the state have begun at DNR. Paul indicated that Cathy Stepp and Matt Moroney are both impressed with what they've seen from the St. Croix/Red Cedar farmer-led project. On a side note Paul stated that DNR is starting to deny some high capacity well applications in areas where it may affect water supply.
- Ruth: Rice Lake may be applying for some grants pertaining to storm water and MS4 permits. Also, there are new sand mining permit applications coming in for areas in the Red Cedar Watershed.
- Tim: Some farmers in Barron County who are closely affiliated with Farm Bureau approached Tim after attending the Red Cedar Conference, and expressed interest in starting some type of farmer-led effort in Barron County. Tim is also planning an irrigation workshop soon.
- Ron: Attendance at the Red Cedar Conference was the best so far, at 251 people. This included 22 farmers. Ron also mentioned the draft final report that has been created for the Erosion Control project on the Red Cedar River. Ron also mentioned the Jerrett Creek project on the east side of Menomonie, where Dunn Co and the City of Menomonie are both working to change land management practices on county and city land in this small watershed which drains directly to Lake Menomin. The Tainter/Menomin Lake Improvement Association (TMLIA) is sponsoring a Landscaping Workshop for shoreland property owners on 4/5 in Menomonie. Also Ron is working with the Dunn County Board to try to establish a county fund for water quality improvements.
- Tyler: A TRM grant is in the works for an ag operation in the Vance Creek headwaters area. There may be another TRM grant on the horizon for another project in Barron County. Tyler

also said that Chippewa County is doing an extensive groundwater study in the western part of Chippewa County that also includes some of Dunn and Barron Counties.

- Dan P: Red Cedar Conference had a lot of great take-home messages regarding the farmer-led presentations. Dan also indicated that Dunn Co is starting to money into conservation easements for trout stream areas. Also, the Dunn Co Sportsman Alliance are restoring some land along the Red Cedar River across from one of the larger erosion sites studied in the project mentioned by Ron.

Review of Stakeholder Analysis from Last Meeting: At the previous meeting a detailed stakeholder analysis was done to try to determine who, if any, stakeholders or groups need to be at the table to assist with the planning process. There was lively discussion on this topic. Some names/interests that were discussed, and what was determined about their possible roles, are listed below:

- Randy Eide—City of Menomonie. The group agreed to ask Randy to join the effort, as he represents the urban runoff sector very well (Dan Z will talk to Randy).
- Nels Paulson—University of Wisconsin Stout. Nels is a sociology professor who spoke at the Red Cedar Conference on the topic of stakeholders and civic engagement. The group agreed to ask Nels to at least come to the next meeting and see what kind of role he may play (Dan Z agreed to talk to Nels).
- County NRCS staff. The group was unsure whether or not county NRCS staff needs to be at the table at this point.
- Dairy CAFO operators. Tim believes some of these folks should be at the table, and agreed to talk to some operators who are also affiliated with Farm Bureau to see if they would be interested.
- Town of Grant stakeholders. It was suggested that Mark Deitch from the Town of Grant project may be a good representative of the farming sector. Dan P agreed to talk with him to gauge his interest.

Other discussion on this topic included some ideas about public meetings to occasionally share what the Partnership was doing, and give other stakeholders a chance for input.

Next Steps: A timeline needs to be developed for writing the plan, with the goal of completing a nine-element plan that EPA would accept, by January of 2015. Dan Z will likely be coordinating the actual writing of the plan with the Partnership's help and counsel, and using some of the documents produced by Karl Hakanson for River Country RC&D. Dan Z will work on a timeline and work plan for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next meeting will be Monday, April 28th at 9 AM in Menomonie.