

## Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

4/28/14, Dunn Co Ag Service Center, Menomonie, WI

**Present at the meeting:** Ron Verdon-TMLIA; Dan Prestebak, Amanda Hanson- Dunn Co. Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher-Barron County Conservationist; Buzz Sorge-WDNR; Nels Paulson-UW-Stout; Randy Eide-City of Menomonie; Rod Olson-Desair Lake Association; Dan Zerr-UW-Extension Natural Resource Educator

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

- Amanda: There was a meeting of the Farmer-Led council project last week, which Amanda attended. A feature of the meeting was a presentation on soil health by NRCS staff.
- Dan P: He has not contacted Mark Deitch yet about possibly joining this group. Dan took some time to explain details about the Town of Grant Ag Enterprise Area, and AEAs in general. Also, he has heard that there are concerns about farmer-led efforts from other county conservation folks in the state. He is attending a statewide meeting of county conservation directors next week, and will help communicate to that group about how well farmer-led efforts are proceeding in this part of the state.
- Nels: This was the first meeting that Nels attended and the group is happy to have him as a representative of both UW-Stout, and also a researcher who has been working on issues in the watershed. He let the group know that UW-Stout has received an NSF grant to help train students in various research techniques, and Nels said that seven professors and the students they work with under this grant would benefit from working on issues in the Red Cedar Watershed. He asked that the group give him feedback on some ideas for research, and he will supply a list of the professors and their areas of interest. The group agreed to look this over and give him feedback at the next meeting.
- Buzz: He talked with Andrew Craig, who is working for DNR out of Madison on watershed planning issues statewide. Andrew provided some advice on writing a 9-element plan for the Red Cedar. Buzz also thanked Nels for being at the meeting and asked that he provide any suggestions possible for getting stakeholders to the table. Nels said to make sure they are the right people...people that may not necessarily be a perfect representative for whatever group they might represent, but rather that they are the kind of people that will want to be involved and provide good input and energy. Buzz also talked about the need to take what we've learned from the farmer-led project so far, and start making a template for how such efforts can be started in other parts of the state. And he stressed that water governance and civic governance training are needed.
- Tyler: Barron Co now has teleconferencing available, and Tyler offered that we can use it for meetings if people don't want/can't drive to a particular meeting. He also mentioned that folks in the Chetek Lakes area are considering starting a lake district.

- Randy: This was Randy's first meeting, and the group is glad to have him as a stakeholder representing both storm water concerns and the City of Menomonie. Menomonie's storm water management plan is in the process of being updated, and the city is working to improve on the amount of sediment kept from water bodies in the city. Also, Randy mentioned that there is a group called "Friends of the Red Cedar" that wants to start a lake district, and will be having a listening session at city hall on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM, with the City Council meeting starting afterward at 7 PM (so only one hour long).
- Rod: This was also Rod's first meeting with the group, and they were happy to welcome him as a representative of Desair Lake, and also new co-chair of the Red Cedar Conference. He has been working with the City of Rice Lake on storm water issues, trying to help them see that compliance with their new storm water permit is in the best interest of them, and the watershed in general. He is also interested in the idea of farmer-led councils involving farmers in the Rice Lake area, and also perhaps the idea of water quality trading with farmers and the city. He also talked about organizing farmers in the Chetek area as well. Rod is also meeting with people affiliated with the Turkey Store in Barron and wants to explore the idea of organizing their cooperating turkey growers into a farmer-led effort.
- Ron: TMLIA was awarded a Lake Stewardship Award at last week's Lake Conference in Stevens Point, and Ron thanked the group for all their support in helping make that award possible. The final report for the Erosion/Habitat project that TMLIA has headed is just about in a final form, and Ron thanked everyone for their help. He may do a presentation to the Dunn County Township Association about the project. Ron is also still working on a county-wide water quality fund that would come from the county's sales tax revenue. He's working with county board members on this, and will keep the group updated. He also briefed the group on the Landscaping Workshop held on 4/5, which included 54 landowners, and was put on by TMLIA, UW-Extension, Cheryl Clemons, and Dunn Co. He also talked about the purchase of 178 acres of land along the Red Cedar River by the Dunn Co Sportsman's Alliance...land that is very close to some of the erosion sites mentioned in the above study.

**Review of Stakeholder Analysis:** In addition the comments from Nels above, more discussion took place about stakeholders needed at the table. Tim Jergenson was not present at the meeting, but said at the last meeting that he would talk to some potential farmers who may be interested in participating. Dan Z will follow up with Tim to find out what he's learned. Ron and Dan P will talk to possible representatives from the Dunn Co Sportsman's Alliance. Rod will be meeting with some realtor groups and may try to determine if someone from that sector may be interested or a good fit. Buzz agreed to talk to West Wisconsin Land Trust about participating. Randy and Ron will talk to 3M. Tyler will talk to a new Barron Co Board member who may be a good fit. And Rod and Tyler will talk to other possible stakeholders in the cities of Cumberland, Rice Lake and Barron.

**Work Plan/Timeline for Writing the Plan:** Dan Z created and handed out a rough draft of a timeline/work plan for completing the watershed plan over the next year (attached below). The group discussed it briefly, with some concerns about the pace of writing the plan.

**Next Steps:** The individuals in the group will follow up on items mentioned above, and Dan Z will begin working on the items in the work plan below. Tyler will reserve a room in Barron for the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The Partnership's next meeting will be Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at 9 AM in Barron.

## **Timeline for Writing a Comprehensive Watershed Plan for the Red Cedar River System That Meets 9-Element Requirements**

- 1) Review current document from Karl Hakanson
  - May 2014
  - Develop a list of needs for the new document based on what's missing from Karl's work
  
- 2) Discuss with the team what is needed from them in order to construct a comprehensive watershed plan
  - At the May 2014 meeting
  
- 3) Begin revising/rewriting the new plan
  - June 2014
  
- 4) Plan writing continues with assistance from the team, through both electronic communication and monthly meetings
  - June 2014 – January 2015
  
- 5) First draft of plan submitted to the team for review
  - February 2015
  
- 6) Continuous review and revisions
  - March – May 2015
  
- 7) Final plan ready for DNR/EPA review
  - June 2015