

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

5/28/14, Barron County Government Center, Barron, WI

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

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

- Dan Z: Tim Jergenson couldn't be at the meeting, but Dan had a brief phone conversation with him last week. Tim told Dan that some money was being put toward a farmer-led council in Barron County. Tyler and Julia filled in some of the blanks, saying that Farm Bureau has decided to contribute \$3,000 to the effort of establishing a farmer-led council in Barron Co. Additionally, members of Farm Bureau along with other folks from last year's Farm Tech Days committee voted to put \$15,000 of unused money from Farm Tech Days toward the farmer-led council. Currently it is thought that most of this money would be for incentives for agricultural best management practices. Buzz indicated that there may be some DNR money to help augment these funds, which could be used by Tyler for personnel and time.
- Nels: The Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) grant project at UW-Stout is about to get underway. Nels has received some input from members of the Partnership but is still looking for other ideas that may help focus faculty efforts. He is also meeting with Bill James about research ideas tomorrow. Discussion included ideas such as exploring further the economics of clean water, and also exploring social research into the idea of using a portion of sales tax revenue for water quality work.
- Buzz: Passed on comments at this time.
- Tyler: Nothing new beyond what was mentioned regarding a possible farmer-led council for Barron Co.
- Dan P: Buzz and Dan presented to a WLWCA meeting of county conservationists a few weeks ago on the farmer-led concept. The presentation and meeting went well, and reception was good. There was still some resistance inspired by the fear that money would be diverted from land conservation offices to farmer-led project/councils.
- Julia: Farmer-led councils are working to decide how incentive money will be used. Julia also met with State Senator Sheila Harsdorf, who is interested in protecting water quality in the Red Cedar River watershed. Harsdorf also was positive about the state budget initiative focused on money for farmer-led councils.
- Randy: 3M is interested in having someone participate in the Partnership, and will likely choose someone to represent them soon. Also, the City of Menomonie is still in the process of updating their storm water management plan.

- Rod: Met with and presented to the NW Wisconsin Realtors Association on the topic of the Red Cedar River Conference. This group will make a decision on whether or not to support the conference with funding. Also met with Cooper Engineering, the firm contracted to do storm water work for the City of Rice Lake, about supporting the conference. Rod also kayaked a good bit of the Hay River and the Yellow River, taking pictures along the way. He found many eroding bank sites, and also a handful of barnyard located right on the river, that definitely need attention.
- Ron: TMLIA received \$3,000 from 3M for information and education work related to eroding sites on the Red Cedar. Ron, Buzz and Randy, along with a few other officials from the City of Menomonie will be meeting with Emmons & Olivier Resources Inc. in the Twin Cities to discuss minimal impact design standards (MIDS) for storm water.
- Paul: The City of Rice Lake is still fighting their MS4 permit, and getting lots of press about it. They have hired attorneys to fight against it. Also there is tension and confusion in Menomonie inspired by the group of people wanting to start a lake district for Tainter and Menomin Lakes. These folks are more interested in in-lake solutions rather than watershed-scale solutions. Paul will be on WPR's "The West Side" radio program soon to talk about water quality issues in western WI. He solicited ideas and talking points from the Partnership.
- Amanda: Passed on comments at this time.

New Stakeholder Discussion: Several people were going to contact other potential stakeholders who we may like to have in the Partnership. Dan P has not yet contacted Mark Deitch in the Town of Grant, but will try in the next month. Ron will contact members of the Dunn County Sportsman's Alliance. Rod will contact the Turkey Store in Barron and will also try to recruit someone from the City of Rice Lake. It was decided that NRCS should be part of the Partnership, and Tyler and Ron will contact their respective county NRCS staff members to see if they are available.

Assessment of Draft TMDL Implementation Plan (Hakanson): Dan Z presented a summary of his assessment of what needs to be done to the draft plan created by Karl Hakanson in 2012. Parts of the plan are comprehensive and well done, but there are many places where new work and updating of data need to be done. The group provided good feedback on this, and Dan will begin the process of redrafting individual sections with help from the appropriate partners, and review from the entire group.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next meeting will be Tuesday, June 24th at 9 AM in Menomonie.