

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

7/29/14, Barron County Government Center, Barron, WI

Present at the meeting: Ron Verdon-TMLIA; Dan Prestebak, Dunn Co. Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher-Barron County Conservationist; Paul LaLiberte, Alex Smith-WDNR; Nels Paulson, Tina Lee, Chris Ferguson-UW-Stout; Randy Eide-City of Menomonie; Rod Olson-Desair Lake Association; Mike Wendt-3M Co, Menomonie; Bob Fitzwilliam-West WI Land Trust; Julia Olmstead, Katie Wantoch, Dan Zerr-UW-Extension

Updates: The idea of an “update/check-in portion of our meetings was discussed, since several people have voiced concerns that the check-ins take too much time. The group agreed that check-ins should continue, but should be limited in length and scope. Individuals then shared their check-in information/developments pertinent to the Red Cedar River Watershed (RCRW) efforts.

- Paul: An “elevator” speech about applying civic engagement techniques to TMDL implementation efforts in the Red Cedar Basin has been produced by DNR. Paul also is compiling a list of accomplishments in the Red Cedar Basin for use during a presentation to the Menomonie City Council on 8/4 at 6:30 PM. The list is quite extensive and shows just how much is actually being done in the effort to improve water quality in the region.
- Bob: WWLT has received a \$50,000 grant from McKnight which focuses on stream bank easements.
- Ron: TMLIA has been doing many presentations to towns, villages, and other groups about issues and solutions in the Red Cedar Basin, and has more coming up. Their annual meeting is Saturday, August 2. Ron also announced that Rod Olson is the 2014 winner of the TMLIA “good neighbor” award.
- Mike: Asked that people contact him about leases for hay land (that was formerly cropped) on 3M property in Menomonie.
- Alex: This was his first time attending our meeting. Mentioned that 3M in the Cumberland area is reducing storm water inputs to Beaver Dam Lake/Hay River through storm water diversions.
- Julia: There have been 13 conservation walkovers and roughly 17 acres sampled for soil in the Hay River watershed related to the farmer-led efforts there. A workshop tied to all the farmer-led efforts in NW WI is tentatively scheduled for 9/4.
- Nels: The REU students are nearly done with their summer of work. A great deal of data has been collected, and the students will present some of their findings and research at the Raw Deal in Menomonie on 8/6 beginning at 5 PM.
- Katie: Has been busy with county fairs recently. Is in the process of work planning for the fall.
- Dan P: Amanda is working in the field and talking with two more farmers who are interested in the Hay River Farmer-led Council. Dan will be presenting to the County Board soon on the work being done by his department, including water quality work in Dunn County.
- Tyler: Not much new to report.

- Rod: Lots of news. Got back the water quality monitoring results from samples he took on the Chetek Chain of lakes earlier in the summer. Phosphorus levels were worse above the lake than below, which is not unexpected, since flowage lakes often act as sinks for phosphorus. Red Cedar Lake has agreed to give \$500 to the Red Cedar Conference. The City of Rice Lake believes they are meeting the requirements of their MS4 permit. There are some new cropland projects going on in the Desair Lake watershed. Rod will be speaking to Jenny O folks about contributing money to water quality efforts in the watershed. Rod also mentioned that Bill James lost about \$40,000 worth of water quality monitoring equipment in the watershed to theft. The equipment has been replaced.

New Stakeholder Discussion: The group discussed whether or not to pursue some new stakeholders based on concerns or suggestions from current members of the group. Suggested new stakeholders included the people trying to organize the Tainter/Menomoin Lake District. The group decided to wait to see what happens with that effort before reaching out to anyone from that interest group. They represent an opinion that may need to be engaged at some point. Some in the group thought that more representation from lake districts in general may be a good idea. Alex is connected to many, and will reach out to see if any are interested. Sand mining interests were also suggested as possible stakeholders. The group agreed that, while actively pursuing this sector is not needed, the group is open to their participation. Farmers are a continuing suggestion for better representation, but many in the group feel that until we have a clearer purpose for them in the group, it may be premature to ask them, especially during busy times of the year. Some in the group also thought that each of us needs to think more about our purposes/roles as stakeholders in the group.

Discussion of the form/structure of the plan: Dan Z asked the group to voice their opinion on the form of the final plan. Basically, should it follow a form that presents each of the EPA Nine Key Elements as a chapter, or should it be more of a topic-oriented form. The draft plan table of contents produced by Karl Hakanson in 2012 was presented along with the table of contents of the TMDL implementation plan for the St. Croix River. Karl's draft plan is laid out per EPA's nine elements, and after some discussion, the group agreed that following this format will work for us. Dan agreed to send Karl's draft to everyone for their review.

Civic Governance: Dan Z handed out a one page Civic Government Policy Document from civic governance training that many in the group are currently undertaking. The document contains many good guidelines and ground rules for how to function as a group of stakeholders, keeping civic engagement/governance in mind.

Future Meetings/Next Meeting: The group discussed whether or not to set meetings monthly (one at a time) or to set a permanent time of the month to meet. The group agreed on the second Wednesday of every month. Thus the next meeting will be September 10th in Menomonie.