

# Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

11/12/14, Dunn Co Ag Service Center, Menomonie, WI

**Present at the meeting:** Paul LaLiberte, Buzz Sorge – WDNR; Nels Paulson – UW Stout; Randy Eide – City of Menomonie; Ron Verdon – TMLIA; Dan Prestebak – Dunn County Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron County Land Conservation; Rod Olson – Desair Lake Association; John Sipple – NRCS Dunn County; Mike Wendt – 3M; Katie Wantoch – Dunn Co UW Extension; Julia Olmstead, Dan Zerr-UW-Extension.

**Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda:** Meeting minutes from the October meeting were reviewed, with no changes. Agenda for the day was also reviewed with no significant changes.

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

- Dan Z: Told the group about a presentation he and Nels were a part of on UW-Eau Claire's campus earlier in the week. They did a combined talk about issues in the Red Cedar, both from the water quality perspective, and the human dimensions perspective. The talk was part of a week-long lunch series about water issues both locally and globally.
- Julia: Meetings with farmers in the councils will start up again now that harvest season is coming to a close. 2014 end of year report on the Farmer Led project will be coming out soon. A short PR video about the project is nearly done and was reviewed by the group near the end of the meeting. She is also working with John Sipple to create a cover crop working group in NW WI.
- Mike: 3M land that was in corn production has all been harvested. They are still looking to lease hay land for next year. There has also been a drainage line installed at the Menomonie facility that is moving a significant amount of storm water runoff to a retention pond on the property.
- Paul: Is working with Steve Nold on UW-Stout's campus to investigate legacy phosphorus loads in the Red Cedar system, along with possible P loading from groundwater. Is also bringing some scientists together in January of 2015 to find out where the science is today on the issues of groundwater P loading.
- Buzz: Kristen Flores of UW-Stevens Point (soon moving to Chicago) has drafted a paper about the human dimensions of watershed management. Buzz has seen the draft and thinks it is very applicable to the approaches the group is discussing. The paper has been submitted for publication and should be out in a few months. The Lake Leaders class has spent some quality time recently discussing civic engagement and civic governance, and there was considerable interest. Also, a tracking system for BMPs and other watershed activities was introduced to people in western WI by Flatrock Geographics, a company that is working with Washington Co, MN to provide them with ways to track water quality work.

It may be something useful to the Red Cedar effort. Another tool called EVAAL (Erosion Vulnerability Assessment for Ag Lands) was demonstrated by DNR to the St. Croix Implementation Team, and this tool may also be appropriate for the Red Cedar.

- Katie: There is concern in the ag sector over corn harvesting due to lower prices and early snow. The weather is also causing concern about manure being left in pits and possibly being applied on snow.
- Tyler: Also concerned about manure storage issues due to weather. Took a sample of sediment from Chetek Lake chain, and found high amounts of P that may be economical to dredge and apply. Is working on some inventory work for the plan, and determined that there are about 40 barnyards of concern in the Barron Co, and estimated they are producing about 1,600 lbs of P discharge annually. Also mentioned that the City of Cumberland will be upgrading their waste water treatment plant.
- Randy: The meetings to move the City of Menomonie toward some of the minimum impact design standards (MIDS) for runoff discussed with a MN consulting firm will begin after the first of the year. Also, the updated storm water management plan for the city is in the City Council's court. The city's new waste water treatment plant permit will take the discharge limit down to 0.1 mg/l of phosphorus.
- Dan P: Will be meeting with NRCS about 155 acres of county land and how best to manage it. The pH of the land needs to be determined. Also passed out some maps showing the areas of Dunn Co that fall within the TMDL area of interest. It excludes everything from below the dam, and also the Wilson Creek watershed above the dam (as Wilson Creek drains to Lake Menomin right near the dam itself, so impact on the lake is minimal and was not included in the TMDL).
- Ron: Some shoreline restoration work in the Jarret Creek watershed has been completed. The County Board vote on whether or not to authorize the money for a water quality specialist position is scheduled for this evening. Spent some time on the Red Cedar River since the last meeting and photographed all the erosion sites of concern. They are in worse condition now than before due to high water and high flows during this past season.
- Rod: Gave five talks in the last month in Barron Co about the Partnership and about the Red Cedar Conference. Also bought a back hoe to help people install rain gardens on their property to minimize runoff. Rice Lake has decided to put some rain gardens in the city. Produced a paper about all the visual information he obtained floating the Red Cedar River system. Is also looking to have a high-quality video done using some of the footage he shot in the watershed.
- John: Looked at cover crops (rye) that were seeded from the air this year (about 7,000 acres in Barron, Chippewa and Dunn Counties), and most acres seemed to be doing well. He will follow up with producers in the spring to see how things went and gauge their satisfaction.
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**Discussion of Modifying Work Plan:** We are behind in the work plan due to Dan Z not being able to get a draft of Chapter 2 done on time. The group discussed how to keep things on schedule. Dan will have a draft of Chapter 2 by the December meeting, and subgroups were organized to work on Chapters 3 & 4.

Chapter 3 subgroup is Dan Z, Dan P, Tyler, and Paul. They have scheduled a conference call for 11/19, and will work to have something ready for the December meeting. Chapter 4 subgroup is Dan Z, Nels, Julia, Buzz, and Ron and will work to have something by the January meeting. Dan Z agreed to make sure everyone has a copy of the St. Croix Implementation Plan, as well as the Red Cedar draft plan created by Karl Hakanson.

**Discussion of Chapter 1 Draft:** Dan Z had sent a modified draft of Chapter 1 to the group the previous week. A discussion took place regarding changes to this draft. Details of water resources, such as miles of streams, acres of water, etc. should be added. The group also wants to make sure we put a second map in the next chapter that shows just the TMDL area, not the entire watershed. As far as citations go, the group decided to add (see Chapter X) in parts of the intro, pointing to more detail. And then have a reference page identifying sources for each chapter's citable text.

**Needs for Chapter 2:** Dan Z will be working on a draft of Chapter 2 for the next meeting, and discussed with the group any further needs. Most of the material in Chapter 2 will be pulled from the TMDL and from the previous rough draft of a plan.

Further needs for Chapters 3 & 4: The subgroups that have been organized will work to determine other needs for these chapters as they begin their work.

**Evaluation:** An evaluation of the meeting was conducted, with each team member rating the meeting from 1 (worst) to 5 (best). If anything less than a 5 was given, the person was asked to elaborate on the gaps that caused a lower rating. All but three people rated the meeting a 5. The others all ranked it at 4, with gaps including the following items:

- Dan P: Not sure if EPA needs will match the needs we have as a group in our planning process. The group is confident we can include the 9 key elements (EPA's needs) while still meeting all our local needs.
- Rod: Says Dan Z can be more aggressive with the group in terms of getting them to work hard on the various assigned tasks.
- John: The meeting started late, and subgroups should have been set up sooner.

**Next Meeting:** The Partnership's next meeting will be Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> in Barron.