

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

2/3/16, Meeting held via GoToMeeting on the web due to weather

Present at the meeting: Andrew Norman – WWLT; Buzz Sorge, Paul LaLiberte, Alex Smith – WDNR; Tom Quinn – Farmers Union; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron County Land Conservation; Dan Prestebak, Lindsay Olson – Dunn County Land Conservation; Rod Olson – Desair Lake Restoration; Gerry Johnson – Red Cedar Lake Association; Bill Miller – Big Chetak and Birch Lake Association; Kristina Olson – Chetak Lakes Protection Association; John Sippl – NRCS; Ron Verdon – TMLIA; Randy Eide – City of Menomonie; Julia Olmstead, Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Meeting minutes from the December meeting were presented for review, and agenda was discussed. No changes to either.

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

- Dan Z: Shared the status of the Plan with the group. Plan was approved by DNR and EPA in mid January, with some notes on a few things that should/could be changed. Dan, Paul and Tyler had met via phone call in the previous weeks to iron out some details on how to address the comments. Dan will get comments addressed in the Plan and send to publications folks at the Environmental Resource Center in Madison to do a nicer layout, with some additional photos provided by many of the partners. Also Dan gave a presentation at the January meeting of the Dunn County Board about the Plan, which was well-received, with many good questions. The Dunn County News and the Eau Claire Leader Telegram both ran stories about the presentation/Plan.
- Andrew: WWLT is undertaking one new project to protect about 50 acres just upstream of Tainter Lake. The land is mostly floodplain forest with about 1,600 feet of shoreline.
- Bill: The BCBLA received feedback from DNR on their lake management plan. DNR is in favor of a proposed alum treatment after curly-leaf pondweed is under control. They are seeking a 4th year extension for their grant to treat CLP with leftover money, but this is still not approved. They will be meeting with DNR later this month for further discussions.
- Gerry: 2015 was the 3rd year for their AIS grant. Two beds of CLP should not need further treatment at this time, but should be monitored and some hand pulling done on small areas along with continued monitoring. Two smaller beds have been spotted, but at this time hand pulling and monitoring should be sufficient. The RCLA was approved for an extension to spend their leftover funds. This will pay for Birchwood Academy to pull at some sites. Boy Scout troops are helping with Clean Boats Clean Waters activities. RCLA also applied for a healthy lakes grant for rain gardens and diversion projects.
- Julia: Previous day's scheduled meeting with the farmer led council was postponed due to weather. FLCs are very interested in how to be profitable while still protecting water

quality. There will be a seminar in Ridgeland sometime this year with all the councils. The Hay River FLC is looking for money for mitigation of runoff coming from gullies in the woods. Rod Olson offered to help in some capacity, as he has done similar projects in the Rice Lake area.

- Dan P: Dunn County's update of their Land and Water Resource Management plan is underway, and a meeting of an advisory group for this update met on 1/26, with 40+ people in attendance. The next meeting will be held on 2/16. Mark Hazuga of DNR wants to set up some more water quality monitoring in the Hay River/Farmer-Led Council watershed. The Chimney Rock Wildlife Area in the County was for sale on DNR's latest list of land sales. The County may investigate purchasing this land, which features about 1/8 of a mile of stream.
- Lindsay: Pointed out that a Google Drive account has been set up for the Land and Water Resource Management Plan revision process, with many pertinent documents, and comments are welcome. The Plan update should be done by the end of the year.
- Kristina: The CLPA is investigating the idea of riprap on an island in the lake that has some erosion issues. They're also looking into installing fishsticks in Prairie Lake. They are also working on a proposal to do some limited dredging. Fundraising for the algae harvester they want to purchase is going well.
- Paul: Mark Hazuga is going to be doing some more water quality monitoring in the Wilson Creek watershed, and also the FLC watershed (as mentioned above). Paul said DNR would be willing to fund some more edge of field monitors if this was desired, but Julia then pointed out that she thinks promoting edge-of-field monitors is not productive at this point, as it's getting more difficult to have them manufactured and maintained, and their usefulness is in question. DNR has staff working on studying changes in phosphorus loads in small streams over time. He also shared some slides he is working on that discuss goals for water quality projects.
- Randy: The City of Menomonie is working on restoring a stream bank on Jarret Creek. Also working on a new regional storage pond. The City is also working on a permit to do some limited dredging in Wolske Bay. He is also working on the annual report for the City's storm water permit.
- Rod: Is coordinating with the Rice Lake District on many runoff control projects such as detention ponds, and rain gardens and other small projects at public landings. Planning for the 3/10 Red Cedar Conference is going well.
- Alex: Is very busy with grants this month.
- Tom: Farmers Union is promoting farmer participation at the RC Conference (again paying registration fees for farmers). He has also been working with Gabe Brown, one of the keynote speakers at this year's upcoming conference, to put on some additional events for farmers in the days following the conference.
- Tyler: Will be attending the west central regional land conservation meeting next week in Eau Claire. The County-funded cover crop signup is underway, and hoping for good participation. The County's land conservation committee is funding a bus for Barron County folks to attend the conference.

- John: Some of the fly-on cover crop seeding failed this past year due to flooding. CRP general sign-up is going on through the end of February. EQIP and Conservation Stewardship Practices sign-ups also underway. There is likely more interest in these programs than there is money available, as funds have been cut back.
- Buzz: Saved most of his check-in for update on DNR/COE grant application (see below).

Update on Lake Protection Grant/Corps of Engineers Funding: A subgroup of the Partnership, along with a few others have been meeting to secure funding via a Lake Protection Grant through DNR, matched by funds from the US Army Corps of Engineers through their “Planning Assistance to States and Tribes” program. The Lake Protection Grant was submitted on Monday, 2/1, by Chris Straight from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, who will act as the grant manager for this project. Several members of the Partnership authored large portions of the grant applications. All totaled, with the LP grant, the Corps money, and money through the Lakes REU grant at Stout, this is a \$600,000 project. The work will be focused mostly on sociological and economic assessments in parts of the watershed, expanded water quality monitoring in parts of the watershed, and water quality modeling done by the Corps (based on the new monitoring results) that could help modify TMDL goals, and also help with targeting specific watersheds. The LP grants will be awarded on April 1.

Evaluation: No evaluation was done for this web meeting.

DATCP Farmer Led Council Funding: The group adjourned at 11 AM so that folks could sit in on a webinar put on by DATCP to discuss the funding guidelines for their new Farmer-Led Council funding program.

Next Meeting: The Partnership’s next meeting will be Wednesday, April 6th, in Barron.