

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

06/08/16, Dunn Co Ag Service Center, Menomonie, WI

Present at the meeting: Alex Smith, Paul LaLiberte – WDNR; Dan Prestebak, Lindsay Olson – Dunn County Land Conservation; Nels Paulson – UW Stout; Ron Verdon – TMLIA; Mike Wendt – 3M; Randy Eide – City of Menomonie; Andrew Norman – West Wisconsin Land Trust; Ted Ludwig – Red Cedar Basin Monitoring Group; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension; Kristina Olson – Chetak Lakes Protection Association (by phone)

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Outcomes from April meeting, as well as current agenda, were reviewed and discussed. No changes added.

Check-In Discussion: Dan led a discussion about check-ins, their length, purpose, etc. The Partnership agreed these were important, but should try to stay brief and on-task. The four Civic Standards in our Foundational Document were reviewed as an additional refresher on check-ins.

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

- Dan Z: Updated the Partnership on the possible visit with Tammy Baldwin. Nothing ever came of the initial contact her office made with Dan, so it's assumed no visit will happen. Update on Julia's position is that UW-Extension is still waiting for DNR's input on position description. A meeting between Extension and DNR is scheduled for this Friday on that topic. Shared a blog post from WI River Alliance that was somewhat critical of the DATCP program to fund farmer-led councils in the state.
- Tyler (was absent, but e-mailed an update read to the group by Dan): Finishing 2 barnyard runoff systems that were started last year. One was what might be our last traditional concrete barnyard with filter strip as the rules may be drastically changing. The other one and 2 others are what I call my big bang for a buck systems. Creating clean water channels through the farmstead avoiding contact with cattle areas. Basically, keep the clean water clean. They aren't perfect, but they are taking care of the majority runoff, for a fraction of the cost. We can do 3 or 4 of these for the price of a concrete system. Duane Kodesh Milkhouse waste collection Headwaters of Desair Lake watershed. Project should be done in the next couple of weeks. Precast concrete tank, pump and pipe to take his milkhouse waste to the existing manure structure.
- Mike: 3M's Earth Day event for employees and families was a success, with about 200 people in attendance, and 15 exhibitors. Menomonie plant is doing some work to remove invasive tree species from land. A fall burn is scheduled for the prairie areas. First crop

from leased land has been harvested successfully. Mike will be retiring this summer, and is working with his people to find a replacement on the Partnership.

- Nels: REU students are coming this Sunday. There will be a reception to welcome them Thursday, June 16 at the Raw Deal in Menomonie at 5 PM. They are in the process of hiring a coordinator for their watershed work, funded by the Lake Protection Grant/COE funding.
- Kris (via phone): Is organizing a healthy lakes group in the area. Have had success with installing fishsticks in the lakes, and will pursue more of this for habitat. A consultant may be hired by the lake association to help guide and move the group forward. May also be a separate meet-and-greet for the REU students in the Chetek area sometime after the one in Menomonie.
- Ron: Two rain gardens are moving forward at Lakeside Park on Lake Menomin, with many partners involved. The Interstate Civic Governance group, including several members of the Red Cedar Partnership, is continuing to meet. A report from that group will be available to the Partnership after the end of the year. TMLIA has completed all the paperwork necessary for their COE funding match, and delivered it to the West Central WI Regional Planning Commission, who is managing that grant. 2017 Red Cedar Conference planning is moving forward.
- Randy: The City of Menomonie is working on the first of eight regional retention ponds. Also working on a facilities plan for the waste water treatment plant. The City is interested in pollutant trading, but is unsure how, or if, it would work, and is exploring it further. Lindsay did a presentation to the City Council on things the County is working on, and it went well. There is new development going on in the Menomonie Tech Park, and with the conversion of some row crop land to urban usage with proper draining and storage of runoff, it should actually contribute less sediment and phosphorus than the cropland. Dredging begins in July on Wolske Bay. Dredge material will be dewatered and land applied. A solar bee may be placed in one of the bays on Menomin to help with aeration, etc.
- Alex: Met Monday with Rice Lake District. They have money left over from a DOT settlement for the runoff events resulting from the Haugen interchange work a few years ago. They spent some money on no-till implementation and buffer installation at boat launches. They have about \$21,000 left and some may go toward a large rain garden at Orchard Beach boat launch. One of the large hills of construction fill material from the Haugen interchange project is now piled with mostly clay on top, and is causing some erosion problems with gully formation. This will have to be addressed. DNR is updating their grant codes and will have public hearings on this as it moves forward.
- Paul: Reiterated what Randy said about how modeling has indicated that converting conventional cropland to urban, with proper runoff management, does decrease NPS pollution issues. Mark Hazuga from DNR recently presented to the Hay River farmer-led council on stream evaluation techniques, and was well received. They may have him back to do a fish shocking demonstration.
- Ted: His first meeting with the Partnership. Described what the RC Basin Monitoring Group does, which includes monitoring 19 streams with low-level monitoring, and 5 sites with higher-level monitoring, and also 7 sites on Tainter and Menomin. Recently their

monitoring work showed that the salt that had been coming off the grounds of Oak Lawn elementary school, decreased with the installation of an infiltration pond, keeping salt out of Jarret Creek.

- Lindsay: A “Sharing Our Resources” fishing event held recently for handicapped and elderly residents went well, and included information about water quality. Dunn County Land and Water Plan update is moving forward at a good pace. The project in Wilson Creek watershed to get more farmers to add conservation practices (funded by an NRCS grant) is moving forward, with 22 landowners having farm walkovers so far. Bill James is compiling his results from winter monitoring on Hay River and Red Cedar River. CREP letters are going out to producers. Lindsay is also participating in this year’s class of Wisconsin Lake Leaders.
- Amanda (not present, but her e-mailed check-in was read by Lindsay): Out today with a co-worker for the transect survey. We have seen some good no-till and also use of cover crops and increased residue. Though there are some areas of clean tillage too. Unique crops found in the southern 1/3 of the County include kidney beans and horse radish. It was common to find peas and oats with new seeding alfalfa fields. We will start west of Menomonie tomorrow on Highway 29 and I hope to end the day somewhere north of Hwy 170 and likely just south of Hwy 64. We have 598 points that we inventory every 1/2 mile as we travel back and forth (east & west) throughout the County. This is an annual survey where we record the current crop planted, previous crop, tillage and residue that can show trends in soil loss at a watershed scale over time. The complete survey starts near Rock Falls and Meridean and will end Northeast of Sand Creek. The Hay River Farmer-Led Watershed Council met this afternoon. The incentive sign-up is going well and includes soil testing, cover crops and grassed waterways. A new requirement to receive incentives is attendance at a council meeting or a field day. The farmers thought that the attendance requirement will provide an opportunity to learn more about the watershed council, to learn from each other (farmer to farmer) along with increasing participation. The field plots have been planted and are coming along, which will have no-till and tillage, and also a cover crop of wheat, multi-species cover crop and no cover crop. Signs will be placed in the yards of those farmers who are cooperators with the watershed sometime this summer, and also at the field plots.
- Andrew: WWLT hopes to close out 4 projects by the end of the year. One will be in the Red Cedar watershed – 67 acres just north of Tainter Lake, which includes 1500 ft of shoreline near the Red Cedar Savannah State Natural Area. This will be kept in current land cover which is mostly riparian and wetland forest.
- Dan P: County Planning, Resource and Development committee will offer a letter of approval to the County Board next week regarding the Lake Protection Grant/COE project. The Land and Water Committee also will offer a letter of approval to the Board regarding the farmer led council project. Colfax is looking for a match for their bank stabilization project near the sewage treatment plant. Some DNR grants may be applicable.

Update on DNR Lake Protection Grant/Corps of Engineers Funding: A subgroup of the Partnership, along with a few others has formed and had their first meeting in May to oversee this

project. The meeting was mostly about transitioning into implementation, and discussed a lot of logistics for how things were going to be managed and who would be responsible for what. The group will be meeting quarterly throughout the three-year project and will continue to report to the Partnership.

Review Timeline and Benchmarks in Strategy Document: Dan Z led a discussion focused on where we are based on the timeline spelled out in the Strategy document. First year goals are underway, and include surveying of watershed residents and collection of water quality monitoring data to help establish a baseline for new modeling. One of year two's goals is to have a reporting/tracking system in place. Lindsay has been investigating some of these options. She will work with Tyler, Randy and Dan Z to keep this moving forward.

Evaluation: All attendees ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best. Everyone rated the meeting a "5".

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next meeting will be Wednesday, August 3rd. While normal scheduling would have the meeting in Barron, it happens that this day is the same day as the reception at the Raw Deal in Menomonie, closing out the REU students' summer work. So the group elected to have the August meeting in Menomonie at 3 PM so people can leave and proceed to the Raw Deal for the reception at 5 PM. Meeting location has yet to be determined.