

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

8/3/16, Dunn Co Ag Service Center, Menomonie, WI

Present at the meeting: Paul LaLiberte – WDNR; Dan Prestebak, Lindsay Olson, Amanda Hanson – Dunn County Land Conservation; Nels Paulson, Alyssa Quilling – UW Stout; Ron Verdon – TMLIA; Mike Wendt, Deb Carty, David Cotts – 3M; Bob Fitzwilliam – West Wisconsin Land Trust; Rod Olson – Desair Lake Restoration; John Sippl – NRCS; Katie Wantoch – UW Extension Dunn County; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Welcome and Introductions: Several new people were present at the meeting, including Deb Carty and David Cotts from 3M Corporation. They will take over as 3M representatives to the Partnership with the upcoming retirement of Mike Wendt, whose work with the partnership is much appreciated. Also present was Alyssa Quilling, the new LAKES Program coordinator at UW-Stout.

Additionally, this was Paul LaLiberte's last meeting with the Partnership as a representative of DNR. Paul will be retiring soon as well. His efforts over several decades toward restoring water quality in the Red Cedar River Basin are greatly appreciated, and his wisdom, knowledge and experience will be missed.

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

Check-In and Discussion: Dan apologized for not sending out a solicitation for the off-month check-in for July.

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

- Tyler (was absent, but e-mailed an update): Transect survey results 18% of the County was planted using no-till methods. This is 26% of the corn and soybean ground. It has been on a steady increase. We have closed in a couple of manure storage facilities, completed a barnyard runoff system, and installed a milkhouse waste collection system (in the Desair watershed). An interesting project outside of the Red Cedar watershed, was a gully project on Sand Lake (flows NW). We installed a drop structure and 360' of pipe to eliminate a serious erosion. We are signing farmers up for our County Cost share Cover Crop program. Trying to push individuals to try something new.
- Ted: Was absent but passed along some citizen monitoring data to Dan Z, who shared it with the group. The data (from June) showed most monitoring sites were showing phosphorus values above the 0.075 mg/L level.

- Amanda: The Hay River FLC voted in favor of filling Julia's coordinator position. They have a field day scheduled for Tues, August 16th on "Soil and Stream Health".
- Rod: Several projects are underway around the Rice Lake area, including drainage basins, a beach restoration with more natural shorelines, parking lot rain gardens, and others. In the Desair Lake watershed, some weirs are being installed in some gullies.
- Ron: The Red Cedar Conference committee is working on next year's conference to be held on March 9. Dredging is done in the Wolsky Bay area of Lake Menomin. Dredged material is dewatering and will be used in landfill when done. Rain gardens will be installed in Lakeside Park. 3M Corp gave \$2,500 toward that effort, which will start this fall. TMLIA has given presentations on Red Cedar work at several events. Randy Eide and the City of Menomonie are installing new stormwater ponds near the Fairgrounds to keep runoff out of Jarrett Creek and out of Lake Menomin.
- John: EQIP was a successful signup this year. September 2 begins signup for cover crops. Just a few years ago there were only around 500 acres of cover crops in the county. Now it's likely in the tens of thousands. Current cost share for cover crops averages about \$45 per acre.
- Nels: Introduced Alyssa to the group. Students completed the REU work for the summer, and it went well. Attended a TMLIA information booth at the Farmers Market.
- Paul: His last meeting with the Partnership. DNR is using nonpoint money to fund statewide soil health training which will begin this fall with the first meeting (in northern WI) being held in Menomonie on 9/29. Recently went with Mark Hazuga to do some stream monitoring. Many headwater streams are silting in pretty bad this year in the Beaver and Vance Creek areas. Regarding the Wolsky Bay dredging, it went well and there were minimal issues with additional turbidity outside the dredged area, and no fish stress reported. Regarding Julia's position and the DNR funding for that position, there are internal lobbying efforts happening to get funding for more than the 11 months or so that has been agreed to. In Fenwood Creek (outside the Red Cedar, in the Wisconsin River watershed), some developments have been made in tying phosphorus index (PI) numbers to SWAT modeling. This work determined that the current average PI in Fenwood Creek watershed is about 3.4, and a PI of 2.5 is needed to get water quality goals where they need to be. This work could be helpful, in this watershed and others, in assisting farmers with using SNAP+ to get their operations to the desired PI (or getting all farmers in a watershed to average out to a desired PI). Also, the third annual "Celebrate the Chippewa River" events are coming up on September 9 (Heyde Center in Chippewa Falls) and September 10 (Phoenix Park and the River in Eau Claire).
- Dan P: Working on the draft of the Dunn County Land and Water plan, which should be out soon. The County approved the DATCP farmer-led grant.
- Bob: Passed out some maps showing WWLT work in the region and in the Red Cedar basin. WWLT is working on streambank easements for the area known as the Russian Slew just upstream of Tainter Lake. They are also doing work near the newly purchased Tyrone property on the Chippewa River (outside the Red Cedar watershed).

- Katie: Discussed the soil health training funded by DNR. It's a three-year project, and the Red Cedar Demonstration Farm will be hosting the outdoor training day either the day before the Sept 29 online course, or the day after. Also the Chippewa Valley Farm-City Day is coming up on September 10th at Alfalawn Farm.
- Lindsay: Also working on the Dunn Co Land and Water Plan, focusing on the water quality section. Still looking at BMP tracking software which could be used for recording/reporting BMPs and other activities associated with implementation activities. Also recently participated in a water quality education event for the local Boys and Girls Club.
- Mike: His last meeting with the Partnership. Introduced Deb and David.
- Deb: Summarized many of the events 3M has annually that involve education and outreach. So far the hay harvest and crop development on 3M leased property is going well.

Summary of meeting with Colleene Thomas (Tammy Baldwin's staff): Dan Z met on July 25th with Colleene Thomas, Tammy Baldwin's Washington, DC staff person for environment, natural resources and agriculture, at Colleene's request; and briefed the Partnership on this meeting. They met for two hours and she had many questions about the Red Cedar project and farmer-led councils. Dan gave her the names of several of the Partners for further info on various topics, and will also pass her contact info onto the Partnership. Sen Baldwin is interested in the work happening in the Red Cedar, and in the farmer-led council initiative, and Colleene wanted suggestions on other things that could be done at the Federal level that would assist with the Partnership's work. Some of the things Dan suggested were expansion of EPA's environmental education grants to allow for more one-on-one work; increasing of Clean Water Act Section 319 funds (funds for non-point pollution issues), and any other legislation that would assist community capacity building, and one-on-one work with land managers.

Evaluation: All attendees ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best. Everyone rated the meeting a "5" except for John, who gave it a "4", with the gap being his own tardiness to the meeting.

The meeting adjourned on time, and many of the partners proceeded to the Raw Deal in Menomonie for the research forum for the REU students and the research they did this summer.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next meeting will be Wednesday, October 5th at 9 AM in Barron.