

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

8/1/18 Dunn County Ag Service Center, Menomonie, WI

Present at the meeting: Liz Osborne – TMLIA; Lindsay – Dunn County Land Conservation; Nels Paulson – UW Stout; Ted Ludwig – Red Cedar Basin Monitoring; Andrew Norman – Landmark Conservancy; Andy Bensed – Barron County Farmer; Alex Smith – WDNR; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Outcomes from the June meeting were reviewed. The current agenda was reviewed and discussed, with Dan suggesting that the check-in be done first to accommodate attendees' schedules.

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

Dan Z: There has been no further word from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation about whether they would like to give us some funding. Will follow up with them before the next meeting. Passed along some dates for events coming up; a field day sponsored by Discovery Farms to the eastern part of the state on August 22, and a shoreline workshop at Beaver Creek Reserve conducted by Patrick Goggen of UW-Extension on August 8.

Nels: REU student receptions coming up Wed, August 8 in Menomonie, and Friday August 10 in Chetek. Reached out to Scott McGovern of UW-Stout to perhaps include some of his students' work in the REU events. REU and TMLIA will be teaming up for some outreach events including a fundraiser for TMLIA at the Duke and Dagger in Menomonie starting next week. Hoping to have a Community Capacity report done by next summer...progress has been delayed by Stout spending constraints. Will likely co-author a paper with Aaron Thompson on how WDNR lake protection grants could be changed to promote and pay for more social science and community capacity work.

Liz: TMLIA working with REU students on outreach (see above). Members of TMLIA took the REU students out onto the lake. There will be a "Menomin Meander" 8.3 mile bike ride on August 18. Wrote a letter of support to the City of Menomonie in support of an electric bus, which could cut down on emissions which would be deposited into the lake. Amber G from TMLIA is attending Lake Leaders this year. TMLIA will have an educational booth at Music Over Menomin on Thursday, August 9. For St. Croix County Land Conservation, they will be going to Madison soon to present the county's revised Land and Water Plan to DATCP. The County is thinking about a possible TRM grant or Army Corps of Engineers funding for some erosion issues in a HUC12 in St. Croix County.

Andy: Tall water hemp is showing up in many parts of the watershed. This is an invasive plant that is resistant to many herbicides once it reaches a certain height, and can grow under the canopy of tall corn. Some organic farmers have been having issues with Army worms.

Alex: DNR is in the process of updating lake protection grant codes. They could be out for public comment this winter. Has been in contact with Upper Turtle Lake District, which has some new active members who may be interested in doing some work to control weeds and algae in the lake.

Andrew: West Wisconsin Land Trust has merged with another land trust organization and is now known as Landmark Conservancy. New website is landmarkwi.org. They have met with Gerry Johnson of Red Cedar Lakes to talk about possible work on Balsam Lake. Helped get five acres of cropland on Gilbert Creek converted back to grassland.

Ted: Three stream monitoring reports so far this year. Streams are running very low at near base flow, with high concentrations of phosphorus. Lakes are quite mixed and quite green. No DNR lake monitoring data has been made available yet this season, but has likely been done...just not entered into the system. Did some bat surveys, and very few little brown bats spotted compared to normal, likely due to white nose syndrome.

Lindsay: Blue green algae blooms have gotten bad lately. The boat landing at Point Comfort is closed because the area is being used for drying the spoils of dredging. Some SEG funds have been committed to a project focusing on nutrient management in the Trout Creek watershed which straddles the Dunn/Chippewa County line. Several CREP contract renewals should be signed soon. Next week interviews begin for a vacant position in the Land Conservation Dept, and interviews will also begin for the newly created soil health specialist position funded mostly by a DNR lake protection grant. The DATCP grants for farmer-led initiatives is out and are due in September. The Hay River FLC is planning on applying. There may be a new farmer-led group coming together in the Town of Grant area, and there will be a discussion meeting for that held later this month. Is working with the health department and just submitted a grant to fund more groundwater monitoring, mostly aimed at about 40 samples in wells in the southern part of the county.

Gerry Johnson (via e-mail): * Clean Boats Clean Waters is monitoring five landing this summer, which is one more than previous years, and is in the middle of its 400 plus hour goal. This represents an increase of over 100 hours of boat landing monitoring over the last few years. * Two sites totaling approximately 20 acres were successfully treated for AIS curly leaf pondweed (CLP) on Red Cedar Lake in late May. Native plants are beginning to fill in at the treated sites. Although summer-long, expanded AIS lake monitor testing will provide us hard numbers in the fall, visual observation of the lakes shows very high clarity levels for this time of year. We believe this is due to the late spring, combined with very fast lake temperature warming, which helped minimize CLP growth. CLP is a cold water invasive which grows much faster in cooler water temperatures (typical spring) vs. fast water warm-up (this spring). Also, no new AIS have been detected through July. * Die study has been completed on Balsam Lake in order to determine water flow in relationship to wild rice beds. Analysis is underway, with a decision forthcoming in the fall as to potential to treat over 100 acres of CLP in Balsam in future years. * Tributary water quality monitoring in all five streams is underway for the first time since 2004, headed up by students from the St. Thomas University in St. Paul under the leadership of Biology Department Dean Tim Lewis. Along with the lake water monitoring, it will give us a completed picture of the current phosphorous loading sources in Red Cedar, Balsam and Hemlock Lakes, and will provide the basis for a new AIS Control Grant starting in 2019. * Purple Loosestrife beetles have been released in a Red Cedar Lake southern bay. * In August, a complete Point Intercept Study on all lakes will be conducted and will provide the foundation for an updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan for 2019.

Rod Olson (via e-mail): 1. Hybrid Eurasian Milfoil has been detected in Clearwater Bay in Rice Lake. This is the first expose Rice Lake has had. Divers removed from the roots six clumps and the Bay was

chemically treated. Close monitoring throughout the lake will continue. There is a public landing in Clearwater Bay and the likely source was a boat. 2. Streambank repair of the NW Tributary coming into Desair Lake will be completed this month now that we have a permit. About 180 feet of eroding bank will be stabilized. 3. After heavy rains, Township road shoulders on hills washed out in our area. Working with the Town Chairman, I was able to get these repaired and actually worked on one hill to demonstrate how this problem can be prevented. 4. All the rain gardens built over the last eight years are doing an excellent job infiltrating water. Maintenance is needed once yearly to keep inlets open and the sediment removed. Two of them required removal of considerable sediment that would normally flow into the lakes. 5. I was able to present a Power Point describing the work on the Red Cedar River by the Partnership last month to the Bear Lake Association and to the Northwest Wisconsin Wastewater Association.

John Sippl (via e-mail): I would like to extend an invite to the group for our Local Working group meeting on Aug 8th at the Barron Cty auditorium. This annual meeting gathers the public's opinion on where NRCS should focus its funds the next fiscal year. The meeting will start at 10Am and go till 12 pm.

Discussion of Reporting: DNR has evidently released some software for BMP reporting, but no one at the meeting knew anything about this. The group discussed options for reporting, and that perhaps Dan could create a template for reporting that follows the needs and goals set out in the Plan. Dan agreed to work on this. Nels said the Community Capacity report coming out next year may have some good guidelines for reporting the "people" aspect of the desired goals in the plan. Everyone believes our reporting should be consistent with the plan, and as efficient and comprehensive as can be, without trying to capture "everything" going on out on the land.

Discussion of More Outreach and/or Social Media Presence: Nels believes the name of the Partnership is too long and clunky, and that some branding exercises may be in order for the group to do refine our title, etc. Dan agreed to put this on a future agenda. There could be the possibility of using an intern from Stout to help with some of this work. Liz stressed that outreach activities should be focused on what people can do for the Partnership/watershed in an effort to make people aware that it's in their hands to help improve water quality. Andy shared that there is an "Everything Cover Crops" Facebook page that may offer some good ideas for outreach. Liz also mentioned using Pinterest for some of our outreach as well. Dan agreed to work on a generic presentation that anyone could give about the Partnership, that could be used for various audiences.

Evaluation: All attendees ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best. Rankings were mostly in the 4.8-5.0 area. Reasons for a less-than-five ranking were mostly focused on poor attendance by many members, and a desire that the members work harder to come up with action items to take back to their constituencies.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next regular meeting date is **Wednesday, October 3rd at 9 AM in Barron.**