

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

10/03/18 Barron County Government Center, Barron, WI

Present at the meeting: Liz Osborne – TMLIA; Lindsay Olson, Dan Prestebak – Dunn County Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron County Land Conservation; Alyssa Quelling – UW Stout; Rod Olson – Desair Lake Restoration; Gerry Johnson – Red Cedar Lakes Association; Alex Smith, Brian Crum – WDNR; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Outcomes from the August meeting were presented and discussed. The current agenda was reviewed and discussed with a change to add time for Gerry and Alex to discuss Big Chetac Lake.

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

Dan Z: Heard from Robert Warren of the Bonneville Environment Foundation. They had indicated a possible interest in funding some of the Partnership's work. However, they have decided, for the moment, to concentrate their efforts in the Driftless Area. But further opportunities may still present themselves in our area. Let the group know that he won't be able to attend the Red Cedar Corp of Engineers project meeting next month, and wanted those who will attend to make sure to get an update on the modeling for the watershed that is part of this project. Also asked the group if anyone sent comments in to DNR on their new water quality standards priorities. No one did, and the deadline has passed.

Tyler: Construction season has stopped due to weather issues, so grass waterways that had been scheduled for this fall will have to wait. New air photos will be done for Barron County soon. Also Ayres Associates will be doing LIDAR for the County in 2019, and resolution of just a few inches should allow for some detailed analysis of runoff issues. Barron County Land and Water Plan is being worked on and is due in August of 2019.

Liz St. Croix County: County Land and Water Plan was presented in Madison and approved in August, though the County Board has not approved it yet. Some transect data has been acquired and will be shared later.

Liz TMLIA: Leadership Menomonie had an ag and environmental science seminar and TMLIA gave a presentation. They also did a presentation to 8th graders. Met with some Stout students doing signage work for a detention pond in Menomonie. University of Illinois contacted TMLIA with questions about harvesting cyanobacteria from the lakes. Annual meeting is coming up on October 20th at Olde Town Hall in Menomonie.

Alyssa: LAKES articles on research are going to be in the Dunn County newspaper. This past summer's REU students who did work on wild rice will be presenting at a national REU symposium in Virginia. Community capacity report is being worked on. Nels has asked around Stout to see if anyone is interested in helping the Partnership with a re-branding effort, but no interest found thus far.

Lindsay: CREP renewals are done, with a couple contracts located in the Red Cedar watershed. Is not sure if Dunn Co will be getting the new LIDAR data next year, but maybe in 2020. Both the Hay River Farmer Led Council, and the new Red Cedar FLC have applied for DATCP grants. Some priorities include

cover crops and soil sampling, but the Red Cedar FLC also wants to use it for precision ag work. They have come up with all the match needed on their own, with no need for county assistance. Jessica Schoen started in September as the new Soil Health Specialist with the County. Red Cedar Demo Farm field day was held on 9/26. Turnout included a lot of students and agency people, but not many working farmers. Will be working with some Stout students to study a pond near the Menomonie airport that has few issues with algae.

Rod: Has been working on some streambank projects and passed out some pictures of some of the work. Has a permit to work on some issues on one of the largest inlets to Desair Lake needing 250 ft of streambank repair. Worked with Tyler on a detention pond at the Barron Co fairgrounds. Red Cedar Conference keynote speakers are lined up, with the committee now working on the breakout sessions. Eurasian water milfoil has been found in Rice Lake for the first time. For now it's located in one bay in a small area. Everything visible has been removed. A woolly mammoth sculpture will be installed at the lake in November, showing the natural history of the area.

Gerry: Red Cedar Lakes Association increased their Clean Boats Clean Waters work, working at 5 locations this year (one more than last year). Have treated two sites for curly leaf pondweed in May, with good success and help from the weather. A pre and post-treatment plant analysis was done with good results. A total aquatic plant survey of the lakes will be done soon. A dye study was completed on Balsam Lake to determine if some CLP treatment could be done in a certain area where there are some wild rice beds located. Tributary monitoring was done on tribs this year, and it showed an increase in P loads from some of those tribs. Will likely move monitoring locations upstream in those tribs next year to try to isolate where the increased load may be sourced. Purple loosestrife has been treated with beetles this year. Also spoke to a condo association and the Birchwood Chamber of Commerce about the Association.

Alex: Nothing new to report.

Brian: His first meeting with the group. Will try to make further meetings if his time and duties allow (a new LTE with DNR).

Dan P: Jessica Schoen, the new soil health specialist, could not attend today's meeting because she is at a soil health training. Jeff Lake has opened up his farm as a demo site in the county. The new Red Cedar FLC will be included in the Hay River FLC McKnight Foundation grant application next year. The Boyceville school district is looking for grants to do 1,000 feet of streambank restoration on Tiffany Creek. Recently visited a farm on the Dunn/Barron Co line, and found some NR151 violations. Is hoping a comprehensive nutrient management plan will solve the problem. The County Board approved an application for a new development SE of Menomonie that drains to Lake Menomin. It's an 80 acre parcel with 54 proposed lots. If each lot is an individual septic system, this could pose a water quality issue, so Dan is encouraging a community system that can eventually be hooked up to the city system.

Randy Eide (via e-mail): Phosphorus Trading: We are continuing to look at P Trading options as part of our wastewater treatment plant effluent standard upgrades. We anticipate seeing a report from Cedar Corp regarding the trading plan on October 8th. If all is in order, we will share with the City Council on October 15th. Regional Ponds: It looks like we are above the cut line and in the running to receive a DNR grant to support our 2nd regional storm water pond in the City. The pond would be located in Wakanda Park and will treat storm water runoff from 110 acres and we should see a 78% reduction in P for that area. The grant is for approximately \$90K. We hope to hear "official word" soon. Another step in reducing TSS and P in the watershed. Sweeping efforts continue in the City. Fall leaf curbside pick up will take place in late October and early November.

Andrew Norman (via e-mail): We have no active projects in the Red Cedar Watershed at this time. We are however working on determining Conservation Priority Areas within our 20 county service area to help focus our conservation work and the Birchwood Lakes Area is part of one of those Conservation Priority Areas.

Big Chetac Lake Management Plan: Alex and Gerry briefed the group on the draft Lake Management Plan that has been done for Big Chetac, and the process used to write the plan. This lake is shallow, has a small watershed that is mostly forested, has some large infestations of CLP, and has a huge phosphorus load, mostly internal, that is delivered downstream to the rest of the Red Cedar system. The draft plan points to some ways to address this issue but lists the treating of CLP with herbicides as less of a priority than many people think it should be. This could be problematic for making progress in reducing the P load in the lake. There was contention among the group of people writing this plan over some of these issues. Most of the research done on this lake indicates that treating CLP is effective (though there were problems in the past with over-application). Research also indicates considering using alum once the CLP is more controlled in order to trap P in the lake sediments and keep it from the water column. The Partnership agreed to address some of this in the watershed plan update (see below) to be done in early 2019, and also offer any resources or service in helping local people in the Big Chetac area to improve the water quality of this lake, and also offer possible help and resources to assist in rebuilding the Big Chetac Lake Association (also spelled out in their draft plan).

Plan Update Discussion: “A River Runs Through Us...”, the plan for the Red Cedar Watershed, and the document used to guide the Partnership, features a schedule for updating aspects of the plan every three years (and then a complete new rewrite of the plan after ten years). This December marks the end of year three, so Dan Z asked the group for input on plan revision. The consensus seemed to be that an addendum “update” document would be the best way to go about this. Dan will send some guidance to the Partnership regarding what aspects of the plan should be looked at by the group, and ask for their suggestions in those areas. The December meeting will be taken up mostly with this agenda item.

Evaluation: All attendees ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best. Rankings were mostly in the 4-5 range. Those that ranked it less than a 5 talked about the need to focus more on the specifics laid out in the plan, and the need for meetings to have more time for large agenda items and less time for check-ins.

Next Meeting: The Partnership’s next regular meeting date is Wednesday, December 5, in Menomonie. Location will be determined later.