

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

12/5/18 Dunn County Government Center, Menomonie, WI

Present at the meeting: Randy Eide – City of Menomonie; Ted Ludwig – Red Cedar Basin Monitoring; Liz Osborne – TMLIA and St. Croix County; Lindsay Olson, Jessica Schoen, Travis Drier – Dunn County Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron County Land Conservation; Andy Bensed – Barron Co farmer; Alyssa Quelling, Chris Ferguson – UW Stout; Alex Smith – WDNR; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Outcomes from the October meeting were presented and discussed with no changes. A brief discussion of finding money or a grant to hire someone to help with water quality monitoring occurred, and it was decided to put this on the agenda for the February meeting.

Sand County Foundation Watershed Conference: Alex, Lindsay and Liz all attended this conference in Winona (held at various locations annually). There were many good presentations on diverse topics. Alex was particularly impressed with the presentation by Ken Genskow regarding social indicators, and how and at what pace people are willing to change their behaviors. This led to a brief discussion about better marketing and branding for the Partnership, in an effort to get our success stories and our work out to a broader audience in the hope that this will move people towards change. We've talked about doing some of this in the past, and the group agreed to address this further at some future meeting.

End of Year Three Plan Update: Built into our watershed plan is an update every three years. The end of 2018 marks the end of year three of implementation. Dan walked through parts of the plan, talking about the areas that obviously need some adjustment, and asked the group to help with some of those. He also asked that they think beyond what's in the three-year old plan, and think about what's missing and what could be added now after three years of implementation. Various people were charged with writing modifications of specific parts of the plan that are focused on their constituencies. Dan asked that the partners get any modifications to him by the end of the first week in January, and he will assemble and edit to produce an End of Year Three addendum to the plan by the time the group meets again in February.

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

Randy: The city of Menomonie contracted for a water quality trading feasibility study which is complete. If DNR allows a 2:1 trading ratio, then the city would have to find 3,652 lbs of phosphorus (P) reductions from watershed lands to offset the needed P reductions to effluent coming from the city's wastewater treatment plant. The city council has indicated they support water quality trading. Also, the city is going to be using Permatrack software for aspects of erosion control and runoff management. City will be working on a new storm water pond soon in the Wakonda Park area.

Alex: Aaron Thompson may be presenting at the Red Cedar Conference next March. He was formerly

with UW-Stevens Point, but left to work at Purdue University. There is talk on the conference planning committee about having him do some sort of workshop with the Partnership on the days before or after the Conference.

Tyler: Working on the revision of the Barron County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, due next year. Has had three meetings with the advisory team, and gotten good input from members. Also discussed the idea of dredging the Chetek Lakes, as there is such a huge quantity of P leaving that lake system and eventually into the Red Cedar River.

Alyssa and Chris: Is working on the Community Capacity report. Application for this summer's REU program has been publicized, and there will likely be 10 applicants accepted this year. Chances are good that someone at Stout will apply for another REU grant to continue the program for another three years.

Liz (copied from an e-mail she sent to Dan): TMLIA: *Had annual meeting attended by about 2 dozen members, including city and county board members. Gave presentation of TMLIA's accomplishments for the year and a 3D watershed model demonstration. *TMLIA is a member of the Dunn County Alliance of Sportsman and Conservation Clubs. I represented us at the last meeting where we discussed the placement of fire breaks at the Dobbs Landing public access site for a prairie restoration/invasives control Rx burn. *TMLIA is a member of the Joint Sustainable Working Group. One of the members, Sustainable Dunn, has dissolved and liquidated their assets to the next couple Red Cedar Conferences. Also, a while back, TMLIA provided a letter of support to Dunn Co. Transit for their electric bus grant application (we focused on the benefit of reducing vehicle emissions contribution to atmospheric deposition of P). They were awarded it partly due to all the letters of support they included showing community investment in building a better future. This is the state's first low/no emissions award. Dunn Co. Transit is one of five recipients along with Madison Metro and La Crosse MTU. *TMLIA, as well as St. Croix County, are members of the Wilson Annis Creek Watershed Partnership. In the last meeting DNR announced they are stepping away from the group due to some conflicts in working with NRCS. Although they were a key stakeholder and asset we relied on for our trout stream restoration projects the group is still moving forward. *The UW Stout students will be presenting their project on the stormwater pond informational sign to us on Dec. 17th. Can't wait to see what they've come up with! *Widely distributed the LAKES REU report to all our channels. A very well done effort by that team! *TMLIA was represented in the WI Land+Water's Food, Land and Water Project by our Legislative Chair. [Here](#) is the press release announcing how the recommendations given by the group were unanimously endorsed by the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB). This could mean powerful support for our local water quality efforts, as one of the LWCB's main responsibilities is to recommend how the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) should allocate state conservation funds to counties. *New calendars and newsletters are now out and available *Our social media intern is coordinating with the library, local book store, and Ted Rulseh (fellow crew 11 lake leader) on a book club/event around his new book, " A Lakeside Companion" scheduled for Feb. *Working on end of the year/start of new year business like work plan, budget, fundraising, and membership renewal. *Meeting next week will be a casual event at Duke and Dagger. *Coordinating with Chippewa Valley Nature Festival to offer a Pontoon Water Quality Tour field trip as part of their conference at Stout in June.

St. Croix County: *I attended the Leadership for Midwestern Watersheds event last month. A VERY worthwhile experience. Lots of good tools coming out to look forward to, and Alex and Lindsay will talk more about Ken's work during the meeting. He did a lot for the St. Croix TMDL. *Planning has begun for the next St. Croix Summit. We found out more at the Kinni Partnership meeting. UW River Falls has really picked up the planning and looks like it will be solely focused on students (grade school/high school level). The "theme" is going to be along the lines of citizen science and how to get involved. Good to see what our sister TMDL is up to perhaps to borrow ideas. *Attended the UW EX/UW Madison hosted Soil, Water, and Nutrient Management meeting in Eau Claire. Speakers

included UW-Extension Soil Specialists Carrie Laboski, Matt Ruark and Francisco Arriaga; Andrew Stammer, Director of the Soil & Forage Analysis Laboratory; and Sue Porter, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Topics included: Cover crops and nutrient management; Can we use soil health tests for fertilizer recommendations?; Evaluating fall manure BMPs; Sampling soils and plants in Wisconsin; Are FGD and SDA calcium sulfite worth using?; Soil compaction issues after a wet fall – recap; and the [Wisconsin nutrient management update](#). Looks like Dunn, Barron, and most of the other counties in the watershed are in the teens for % cropland in NMPs and St. Croix Co is at 27%. The programs most effective at encouraging plans are manure or livestock siting ordinances, CAFO WPDES permits, and DATCP's Farmland Preservation tax credit or cost share. *We are working on our own Lake Protection grant modeled loosely after the Dunn County application. Thanks for being our example!

Andy: Very little growth of cover crops this year because of timing and weather, but research shows that even short cover crops are a catalyst for valuable soil microbe activity. One operator he knows planted a cover crop mix following wheat, put cows on the field in the fall, then planted corn the following spring, and monitoring indicated the cover crop had added nitrogen for the corn. Went to Ireland recently and learned many things from the farmers there about the dairy industry in Europe. Barron County farmer led group will meet next week. It's been hard to get new faces to participate in that group.

Ted: Monitoring currently for chloride (road salt) in Menomonie, with a Stout student doing much of the work. The couple years has shown the city's changes to road salt applications have improved the chloride levels in the water.

Lindsay: Red Cedar Conference planning is going well, with keynote speakers lined up, and break-out speakers now being secured. There have not been many BMPs put in the watershed by the County this year. Wants to work more to tell success stories about what's being done in the Red Cedar. Continuing to work with some Stout students on a pond near the airport that, although it has a mostly agricultural watershed, hasn't had many issues with algae. These students will be presenting on their findings on Dec 17. The new Farmer-led Watershed group in Dunn County got \$40,000 in grant money from DATCP this year. New groups got full funds, while established groups got smaller amounts. Is looking to do some groundwater studies in the near future.

Travis: His first meeting with the Partnership, but had to leave the meeting early. Is new to the Dunn County staff, having just started in early October. Is working on nutrient management in the county with SEG funds.

Jessica: Also new to Dunn County. Talked about her background. Is doing a lot of one-on-ones with farmers regarding soil health and soil sampling. Did some work at the Red Cedar Demo Farm, including getting some frost seeding of cover crops done. In researching soil health, has found research showing that a high ratio of soil protozoa to soil bacteria means there's a lot of movement of nutrients going on, which is good for soil health.

Evaluation: All attendees ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best. Rankings were all fives.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next regular meeting date is Wednesday, February 6, 2019, in Barron.