**Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes**

**10/7/20 Meeting held via Zoom due to Covid19 pandemic**

**Present at the meeting:** Dan Prestebak, Heather Wood – Dunn County Land Conservation; Liz Usborne – DNR & TMLIA; Alex Smith – DNR; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron Co LCD; Nick Stadnyk – Rusk County LCD; Jamey Ladeen – Chetek Lakes Association; Gerry Johnson – Red Cedar Lakes Association; Randy Eide – City of Menomonie; Dick Lamers – TMLIA; Lindsey Ketchel – Landmark Conservancy; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

**Review of minutes of last meeting and current agenda:** The outcomes from the August meeting were discussed with no changes and the current agenda was discussed with no changes.  
  
**Discussion of wake boats and shoreline erosion:** Red Cedar Lake and other lakes have seen an increase in the use of wake boats, designed to make a larger wake for people to basically “surf” behind the boat. These boats can cause shoreline damage because of the larger wake. Gerry initiated a discussion about how to handle this issue. Alex had sent around some links to info on what other lakes had done/were doing about this issue, and others offered suggestions such as working with units of local government to perhaps issue regulations for these boats, and also to contact Mike Engelson of Wisconsin Lakes for his take on what is happening state wide.  
  
**Check-In and Discussion:** Everyone shared any new information/developments pertinent to the Red Cedar River Watershed effort.

Dan Z: Asked if anyone had seen the “Kiss the Ground” movie, and recommended people take some time to view it if they hadn’t. Shared a flyer for a field day in Clark County later this month in conjunction with the Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition.  
  
Nick: Completed a huge barnyard project (using a TRM grant) in the watershed. Will be sending out some pictures and data about estimated load reductions from this project. Has recently seen a growing interest in managed grazing and also restoring land to prairie/pollinator habitat.

Liz (was present but shared these notes via e-mail) – TMLIA:  
• Red Cedar Watershed Conference is moving to a virtual platform next year and is teaming up with partners across the state through the WI Lakes association to be part of a Water Week.  
• If you're in the neighborhood, check out the new rain garden sign at the Lakeside Park boat landing. Ben has been working on this project for over a year now, getting the concept design into the right digital format, managing grants, and coordinating with contractors and the city.  
• Our annual meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, October 13th at 6 pm. A dozen people have registered so far. We plan on having a short presentation of our activities from the year followed by conversations on a variety of topics regarding how to get involved based on different interests including: volunteering with Lakeside Park Rain Garden maintenance/stewardship, volunteering with water quality monitoring, the Red Cedar Watershed Conference, and sustainability of the organization and board member opportunities.  
• We have new Slow-No-Wake buoy volunteers for Tainter Lake. A huge thank you to Dave and Barb Kleist for all the work with the buoys and fielding questions these past years, and now helping pass the torch to Kris Pawlowski and Bob Batchelor. We are beyond grateful for all their volunteer efforts.  
• Another extremely dedicated volunteer, Chuck Tack, shared his latest water quality monitoring insights and information for this season in the attached email.  
• This is my final year as President. I will continue to serve in the role of Past President for 2021. We are actively seeking nominations, but so far do not have a replacement to fill the acting President role.

Liz – DNR:   
My colleagues in the Water Quality Program may also mention Guidelines for Monitoring for Watershed Restoration Effectiveness, so apologies for any redundancy. Chris Willger co-authored the document and it was just released last month. With the Red Cedar River watershed being an EPA approved 9 Key Element plan, and all 9 Key Element watershed plans include water quality monitoring requirements, this document will hopefully assist those efforts.  
A recent map was created showing 9 Key element plans and TMDL areas in Wisconsin. The NKE numbers are ID numbers for each 9 Element Plan that is posted to the 9E plan webpage: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Nonpoint/9keyElement>  
Over the summer, DNR made some major changes updating the Wisconsin Wetland Inventory accessed through the interactive online mapping tool, the Surface Water Data Viewer. The goal was to improve the content and spatial accuracy of the wetland layer as well as add lake, river and stream boundaries to the inventory through enhancements to the surface water hydrology layers.

What changed?

• The updated layer will no longer have point features. Every county in the state currently has point features representing ponds and wetlands that were too small to map with a boundary due to scale and traditional photographic mapping methodologies.

• LiDAR technology and high-resolution orthoimagery have replaced black-and-white stereo photography. This technology provides a better view of the landscape, which leads to better maps. We can now map ponds with a boundary. Small wetlands are now visible and wetland connectivity is clearer.

• Lakes, ponds, rivers and small streams will be polygon features within the wetland layer. We will be sharing our mapped water features with the DNR’s 24K hydro team.

• We have adopted the National Wetland Inventory data structure and standards, as well as the classification system used. For more information, [click here.](https://www.fgdc.gov/standards/projects/wetlands/nwcs-2013)

• Instead of a PLSS town/range data structure, we will use the HUC 12 boundaries found [here.](https://data-wi-dnr.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5a5f60f2f51945a5a98c1b470c5a42af_0?geometry=-98.281%2C43.331%2C-81.560%2C46.063)  
  
Other than that, I’ve been working with Dunn and St. Croix Counties on two separate enforcement sites in the watershed.

Lindsey: The Ferry Pit property will be transferred to the Town of Colfax. Also a project underway to preserve 800 acres near the headwaters of the Red Cedar. Helping with some fundraising efforts for the Devil’s Punchbowl, with a possible celebration of the site happening next spring. Will be participating in some capacity in Wisconsin Water Week next March.

Tyler: Just completed a barnyard project with clean water diversion. This site was having a direct discharge issue into Hay River. County cover crop program signup is wrapping up with 800 acres. Also many producers seem to be adopting cover crops on their own without participating in any program. Is a bit worried about recreational tillage happening this fall. Will be applying for a lake protection grant from DNR next month that will fund a staff person to work on CREP and healthy lakes projects. Recently completed a healthy lakes project on Prairie Lake in the Chetek chain.

Dick: Conference planning is coming together, with keynote speakers lined up, and now working on break out speakers.

Alex: Doing a lot of work for the revised grants program, with many pre-approvals in the last few weeks, and applications due next month. Has been working with both Tyler and Dan P on their proposals.

Heather: Education event in Boyceville went very well. Just finished up some surface water and groundwater sampling for the Red Cedar Conservation Farmers group.

Dan P: Recently used a good bit of county SEG money for nutrient management, as one producer signed up for 500 acres of nutrient management. The manure storage ordinance for Dunn County is being worked on. The County hasn’t had public comments lately due to covid, but is working on a way to do that for the ordinance. Red Cedar Conservation Farmers group recently had a field day. It went well but didn’t have a lot of people due to covid, etc. Chippewa Valley Technical College now has portable WiFi at the Red Cedar Demo Farm, so remote class work and remote learning can be done from the site. A county board committee is working on some reforms to put in place new protections for water resources.

Gerry: Submitted four healthy lakes grants for next year. They have a person working as a shoreland assistant on Balsam Lake looking at three high-priority sites for shoreland erosion issues. Final water quality testing for the season is done, but no results yet. There are no new signs of aquatic invasive species at this time beyond the continuing issue of curly leaf pondweed. Installed five new fish sticks recently in Balsam Lake.

Jamey: Healthy lakes projects are wrapping up, with 4 or 5 lined up for next year. Have been doing some updating of website and landing signs. In planning for next year, there may be a need for more aquatic plant management and perhaps some sediment removal from some of the backwater areas around the lakes.

Randy: Wakanda Park regional pond work is wrapping up. The City is looking for ways to work with Stout students. Dr. Innisfree McKinnon is working with some students to help with best management practices along Galloway Creek. The City will soon be its own responsible unit for recycling. Lakeside Park rain garden sign (mentioned above) is installed. Boat ramp there will be improved and a boat cleaning station will be added.

Rod Olson (via e-mail): During September members of the Desair Lake Restoration Association put in 14 catchment basins in a deep eroding ravine leading to Desair Lake. This is part of a DNR Lakes Protection Grant. Permitting is in progress for additional basins to be built on six other properties on the watershed.

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

**Next Meeting:** The Partnership’s next regular meeting date is **Wednesday, October 7.** This will likely be another Zoom meeting if travel restrictions have not been lifted.