

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

7/31/24 Meeting held at Dunn Co Government Center

Present at the meeting: Tina Lee, Nicole Hayes, Andrew Schneyer - UW-Stout; Megen Hines – City of Menomonie; Tom Bilsse – Tainter Lake District; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron Co LCD; Liz Osborne – WDNR; Chase Cummings – Dunn Co LCD; Brad Luedtke – 3M; Jamey Lideen – Chetek Lakes; Kelsey Hyland, Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

Review of Last Meetings Outcomes and Negotiate Current Agenda: The June meeting outcomes will be discussed below. The meeting agenda was agreed upon as written.

Discussion of Plan Update: Much of the meeting was dedicated to further discussion of the watershed plan update. The current plan expires in 2026. At the June meeting the Partnership laid out some action items to address between that meeting and this one. They are listed below with notes on where things stand at this point, and moving forward.

Action items:

- 1) Farmer-led groups will be contacted by Land Conservation offices (or other members of the Partnership who work with these groups regularly) to discuss the possibility of having a lengthier discussion with them about their role in helping shape the plan.

It's likely that these groups will not have time for any sort of meeting or discussion until the growing and harvest seasons have passed. So Chase and Tyler have agreed to talk with their respective county groups and try to line up some sort of presentation or discussion with the groups during the winter. Dan is available to participate in these as well if needed. Questions to pose to these groups would revolve around how the watershed plan could address their concerns, what the Partnership could do to assist them, and what kind of data would they find useful that the Partnership may be able to deliver.

- 2) Lake residents will be contacted, as above, by those members of the Partnership closest to them, namely the Districts and Associations, to present the same idea as above to their members.

Jamey has discussed with the Chetek Lakes Association the idea of having a meeting to discuss the watershed plan and get their input and suggestions. Dan will work with Jamey on this. Tom and Dan discussed meeting with the Tainter District folks, and the soonest available date that works is during their meeting on Thursday, October 17. Dan will work with Tom and Al on this.

- 3) If any other Partners have connections to organizations that would be valuable in the plan-update process, such as any non-profits, granting organizations, or relevant organized constituencies, they will reach out to those groups.

Chase suggested maybe working with the Dunn County Alliance of Sports Clubs to see if they are interested in discussing the plan and any ideas they may have. It was also suggested that Ducks Unlimited may be worth contacting, especially since they recently hired a grazing coordinator for NW WI. Dan will look into this and contact them.

- 4) Those Partners who have questions about their role in the plan update will go through the current plan and highlight areas where they were singled out for activities in order to determine where they are with those goals, and what any new goals should be for the plan update.

Kelsey pointed out that some of the goals listed in the plan focus on soil test phosphorus...reducing it to cropland need, and also tracking it in the watershed. She agreed to look into this, and work through Liz to develop some contacts at DNR that may be able to help gather currently available data regarding STP. Tyler pointed out all the groundwater data that has been collected in the counties in the watershed in the last few years, and asked the Partnership to consider ways that data can be used in the plan revision.

- 5) Everyone will begin the process of assembling or tallying any sort of data that may help to develop some sort of priority listing for the HUC 12 watersheds.

Chase displayed his ranking system for watersheds from back when he worked in Pepin County. The Partnership agreed that something like this would be valuable, but likely needs to be simplified somewhat. Dan will work with others to come up with something suitable to our needs.

A longer discussion took place about other items of concern. It was pointed out that the Producer Led Watershed Groups (PLWGs) would likely fade if the DATCP grant money for those groups was not available any longer. With the number of PLWGs increasing statewide, and no indication that further money would be allocated to the program, even less funding or a complete lack of funding may be facing the groups soon. We discussed the idea of helping these groups find alternate funding.

A larger discussion of the data needs (touched on in item 4 above) was also discussed. There is water quality monitoring data out there for different water bodies in the watershed. How do we find that data and use it. Chase and Tyler talked about aggregating data the Counties have gathered, and others also discussed how to pull relevant data from DNR's SWIMS database (though Andrew said he'd been having issues with it lately). Generally, the group agreed that getting as much available data beyond what we already have would be beneficial in the planning update.

Discuss the 2023 Annual Report: Dan recently sent a draft of the 2023 Annual Report to the group for their review. It's mostly complete, but people need to review, and especially check their individual entries, as Dan had to build narrative and such from some of the information

provided, and wants to be sure everything is correct. The idea of displaying some sort of cost figures was discussed...showing how much money went into various efforts listed in the report. No concrete methodology for doing this was decided upon, but it may be an item for future discussion. Further discussion revolved around how to use the report for marketing and educational purposes. Megen will look into having some folks in her office help with developing graphics or suitable memes for social media sites. Her and Dan will also work together on creating a summary and press release for the report. Others will need to figure out how, within their own offices and constituencies, to use and distribute the report. Once everyone has reviewed it and Dan has the go ahead to finalize it, other actions with the report will move forward.

Check-In and Discussion: Because of the format of the meeting we did not do our regular check-ins. However a few items were updated to the group. Brad said that the first cutting of the hay planting on some of the land around the 3M plant has taken place. There is also a large chunk of the 3M land (zoned for industrial usage) that is up for sale. Also, Chase distributed a flyer advertising a Regenerative Beef Pasture Walk and BBQ to be held near Prairie Farm on August 19. People should contact Tara Daun for more information (715-492-0329). Tina also reminded everyone that the LAKES REU student's poster reception will be held at 5 PM on Thursday, August 8, at the Raw Deal in Menomonie.

Evaluation: Everyone ranked the meeting on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best. Everyone ranked the meeting as a 5.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's **next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2 at 9 AM at the Barron Co Government Center.**