

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Outcomes

8/26/26 Meeting held via Zoom

Present at the meeting: Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron Co LCD; Chuck Tack – Tainter Lake District; Nick Stadnik – Rusk Co LCD; Jamey Lideen – Chetek Lakes Association; Liz Usborne, Alex Smith, Andrew Craig – WDNR; Megan Hines – City of Menomonie; Lynda Schweikert – Chippewa Co LCD; Becky Brathal – Farmers Union; Todd Prill, Dan Zerr – UW-Extension

2025 Annual Report Discussion: Dan is still waiting on reports from a few members of the Partnership and has sent an email out listing those folks.

Plan Update Discussion: Progress continues on the Plan update. Dan sent the latest draft out to the Partnership for review, and went over much of it with folks on the Zoom. Here are some items from the discussion.

It was suggested that field borders be added to the BMP of “Field Prairie Strips” listed in Chapter 3 of the plan. This will be done, but the same calculations of 90% efficiency in reducing phosphorus load to streams will be applied to both.

MS4 permits will be listed in the “Point Source” section of Chapter 3, but only in specifying that they are meeting or exceeding their TMDL goals.

Costs for BMPs will be added, with some specificity in the HUC 12 section.

Metrics being used to measure BMP installation and success will be more specific.

With regard to the HUC12s, some info on what’s happened in those watersheds in the past ten years should be added (as a baseline), along with what we expect over the next ten years. Tyler is going to do a transect survey of the Barker Creek HUC 12.

More specificity is needed for some of the monitoring information listed in the plan.

Andrew and Dan will have further conversations regarding the plan to get things sorted out. Andrew stated that the deadline of end of 2026 for plan completion is not concrete and can be extended if necessary, but end of year is still the goal for completion of the plan.

Check-In: Everyone took a few minutes to talk about what was happening in their realm/jurisdiction regarding the Red Cedar watershed.

Todd: Has been meeting with all the producer led groups in the region, and wants to bring up some new modeling techniques with the groups. Is working on getting some irrigation water sampling in some areas. Reminded everyone that the WWASH Conference is coming up in December.

Chuck: Filling in for Tom and Al for Tainter Lake District. Will be holding a fund raising event on September 20th. Working on a Healthy Lakes grant involving some folks on the lake. Will be conducting feedback sessions to gather information on whether or not to purchase a weed harvester.

Tyler: Two producers in the watershed are thinking about converting cropland to managed grazing. The demo plot in Barron Co will hopefully be doing a cover crop field day in September, depending on weather and conditions by then. Is beginning a five-year drinking water study with folks at UW-Stevens Point.

Becky: Hay River group has drone seeding of cover crops on its incentive list, but is not sure about it due to the very dry conditions. A pasture walk will be happening on October 6, for which Becky shared an informational flyer.

Liz: Attended, along with other folks in the Partnership, the LAKES REU poster session earlier this month at the Raw Deal in Menomonie. Is helping review the Dunn County Land and Water plan update. Is also helping Dunn Co with interviews for an open position. Also helping Dunn Co work on a small-scale TRM grant and NOD grant. Since Ruth King's retirement Liz is covering all her counties in addition to her own. The NR151 study has collected all the data from the counties in the state and is moving forward.

Megen: With the recent water pressure issues in Menomonie due to too much lawn watering, the City has been busy working on the drinking water issues that resulted. The irrigation ban is still in effect but there are no longer issues with water pressure. Is working with ConAgra on some wastewater treatment issues for waste water coming from their plant. They will be paying the City for some specific treatment. Conducted a native plant workshop earlier this summer. Is working on some private storm water pond inspections.

Alex: There was a fish kill below the Cedar Falls dam, but appeared to be a natural occurrence due to fish getting microbubbles in their systems. Have heard a lot of complaints about filamentous algae. Bear Lake is doing water quality and aquatic plants studies. Surface water grant initial proposals are due September 15.

Lynda: Is starting outreach for their fall cover crop program.

Jamey: Have wrapped up weed management on the lakes already...due to having to start earlier this year than usual. Is hoping to make some more headway on education projects and invasive species issues.

Nick: Had to leave before he had time to check in.

Dan: Nothing much more for check in.

Chase: (via email): Dunn County is having budget woes, and his office may lose a position, while still trying to backfill the position left open by Rick Ingli's departure. Finished the final draft of our 2027-2036 LWRM Plan. Approved by the LCC and has been sent to DATCP for the upcoming October LWCB

meeting. This plan identifies priority areas: the Red Cedar TMDL watershed as well as Lower Pine; Eau Galle watershed; and several groundwater priority areas.

Evaluation: On a scale of 1 to 5 (five being the best), everyone rated the meeting as a 5.

Next Meeting: The next Partnership meeting will be held **Wednesday, October 28th, at 9 AM in Menomonie.**