

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership Meeting Minutes

12/10/14, Barron County Government Center, Barron, WI

Present at the meeting: Paul LaLiberte, Buzz Sorge, Ruth King, Andrew Craig (phone) – WDNR; Dan Prestebak, Amanda Hanson – Dunn County Land Conservation; Tyler Gruetzmacher – Barron County Land Conservation; Rod Olson – Desair Lake Association; Bill James – UW Stout; Julia Olmstead, Dan Zerr-UW-Extension.

Review of Last Meeting and Current Agenda: Meeting minutes from the November meeting were reviewed, with no changes. Agenda for the day was also reviewed with no significant changes.

Check-In: Everyone shared any new information/developments pertinent to the Red Cedar River Watershed efforts.

- Dan Z: Mentioned that subgroups had been meeting since the last Partnership meeting to work on chapters 3 and 4, and would discuss this further down the agenda.
- Paul: Thanked the group for the “check-in” portion of the meetings, as he uses these when making reports to DNR in Madison.
- Julia: Met with Karyn Schauf of Farm Bureau in Barron Co, and also Andy Bensed, a farmer in Barron Co, regarding a proposed farmer-led council (FLC) in Barron Co. They have been talking to Tim Jergenson about starting one, and wanted to talk more with Julia. They would like to keep an FLC very much focused on the “farmer-led” aspect, and are a little concerned about Julia’s role, but have asked Tyler to be at any first meeting. They attended the Horse Creek FLC meeting and liked what they saw.
- Tyler: Handed out a draft of the Barron County Soil and Water Conservation newsletter that features information about the Red Cedar Conference coming up in March, as well as other relevant articles discussing cover crops, nutrient management, etc.
- Rod: Is working with the City of Rice Lake to put some rain gardens in on properties around the lake. Also discussed a recent lake study of Desair Lake that was done by Bill James.
- Bill: His first meeting with the group. He learned a lot doing the Lake Desair study. Is working with Buzz to try to put together a new monitoring program for Tainter and Menomin. Is glad to be part of the REU, and helped direct some of the work by the students to the biology/limnology aspects of the lakes and watershed.
- Buzz: Updated the group on the Red Cedar Conference and some of the presenters.
- Ruth: Has a few different duties since the last time she attended that have kept her away. The City of Rice Lake has had some erosion site problems on which Ruth is working with them. They have also finally officially adopted their storm water regulations.
- Amanda: Will be meeting with the Hay River FLC next week. Nels will be presenting to that group. Paul Kivlin will also be there to talk about results from some of the edge-of-field monitoring sites on some of the farms.

- Dan P: Dunn Co is doing some planning and will likely be drafting an environmental policy for the county. Management discussion of the 157 acres of county land in the Jarret Creek watershed is on hold right now due to trying to figure out the rules for leasing the land. The goal is to lease the land to people who will manage it agriculturally in a way that protects water quality. Last month the county passed the budget that includes a water quality planner position and money earmarked for grant match for water quality projects. The City of Menomonie has also agreed to contribute some funds to this.
- Andrew: Was happy to join the group, and wants to provide any information we may need as the planning/implementation process moves forward.
- Randy (absent): Let the group know by e-mail that the storm water management plan for the City of Menomonie will be going to City Council for approval on 12/15.

Discussion Chapter 1 Draft: Another iteration of Chapter 1 was sent to the group before the meeting, and comments were taken. The group agreed that the “watershed” that is referred to in all portions of the plan should be just the watershed above the dams; in essence the watershed that is dealt with in the TMDL. This will prevent confusion over land cover data, area of concern, etc. Dan Z took down other comments and will make changes.

Discussion of Chapter 2 Draft: Dan Z had sent a Chapter 2 draft to the group the previous week. Comments were taken on changes, and he will incorporate those before the next meeting.

Chapter 3 Discussion: A subgroup consisting of Paul, Dan P, Tyler, and Dan Z has been working on Chapter 3, and had a couple meetings via web conference. This chapter presents many challenges and the subgroup will meet again in the next few weeks and hopefully have something drafted for the Partnership by the January meeting.

Number crunching for phosphorus load reductions has begun, and the Partnership agreed to some preliminary numbers put forth by Paul. These numbers will be refined in further work by the Chapter 3 subgroup. The Partnership also agreed to the plan being a 10-year plan with an interim goal of P load reduction that does not reach the recommended TMDL reduction target, but shows significant progress toward that target over the 10 years of the plan. Andrew agreed that EPA would likely be okay with such progress over a 10-year period, keeping in mind that the TMDL goal should eventually be met through future planning.

Chapter 4 Discussion: A subgroup consisting of Nels, Julia, Ron and Dan Z had a meeting since the last Partnership meeting to discuss Chapter 4. Nels had drafted an outline for the chapter, and the group helped refine that. Nels, with help from others, will work on expanding the outline into a full draft chapter before the next meeting. Tyler offered editing help through his office with this and other chapters that may need such work.

Evaluation: An evaluation of the meeting was conducted, with each Partnership member rating the meeting from 1 (worst) to 5 (best). If anything less than a 5 was given, the person was asked to elaborate on the gaps that caused a lower rating. All but one person rated the meeting a 5, and a few that rated it a 5 still had some comments, which included:

- Dan P: Is hoping the chapters can all coordinate and relate with each other without too many more edits along the way.
- Rod and Buzz: Are concerned that we still reach the March goal of a plan that is presentable to folks at the Red Cedar Conference.
- Andrew: Stressed that the best management practices (BMPs) needed for load reductions MUST be in the plan.

Next Meeting: The Partnership's next meeting will be Wednesday, January 14th in Menomonie.