

SUMMARY NOTES
Compact Designee Kickoff
Wednesday, August 7, 2019
2:00-3:30 P.M.

Verex Plaza, Isthmus Conference Room, 3rd Floor (150 E. Gilman St.)

OBJECTIVE: Finalize the Yahara CLEAN Compact as a *guiding framework* for how we will work together to update our community action plan for cleaning up the lakes.

NOTE: This meeting is intended to reach consensus on the Compact's scope of work, and to raise clarifying points associated with its other sections. It is not to start doing the work. Figuring out how to answer scope-of-work questions, how the steering team will function, the role of consultants, and other details will be addressed at future meetings.

I. Welcome

Present: Kyle Minks, Dick Lathrop, Mike Rupiper, Mark Aquino, Matt Diebel, Martye Griffin, Tricia Gorby, Jake Vander Zanden, Lacey Cochart, Kathy Lake, Chad Cook, Janet Schmidt, Greg Fries, James Tye, Paul Dearlove, Dave Merritt, Ken Johnson, Dea Larsen Converse, Issis Macias (scribe), Luke Wynn (note taker), Bert & Linda Stitt (facilitators)

Absent: Mark Riedel, Sara Walling, Phil Gaebler, Steve Steinhoff, Michael Mucha, Emily Reynolds, Eric Booth, Katie Hepler, Brenda Murphy

Meeting was convened at 2:00 p.m. Tye welcomed the group, and thanked everyone for their participation as designees. Bert and Linda Stitt were introduced as meeting facilitators. An update was provided on organizations that were invited and/or expected to sign the Letter of Intent as strategic collaborators. These included the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Yahara Pride Farms, and REALTORS of South Central Wisconsin.

A. Why a Yahara CLEAN Compact?

Tye thanked those around the table who took the time to meet and offer feedback on the draft Compact. He felt the current language reflected that feedback, and that it made the case for why this effort was needed. He then quoted the following passage from *A CLEAN Future for the Yahara Lakes: Solutions for Tomorrow, Starting Today* (2010), emphasizing the need to be both practical and visionary to fuel cultural change and political will.

"The partners share the belief that lakes and watershed planning needs to be practical, including specific implementation objectives and timelines that produce achievable results. At the same time, the partners agree that planning needs to be visionary in the sense that it inspires the community to develop goals that may sometimes be viewed as unachievable due to constraints of resources and political will at the time (A CLEAN Future..., 2010)."

B. Designee introductions

Designees introduced themselves by name, affiliation, and what excited them most about the collaboration and its possibilities.

- Janet Schmidt (City of Madison): Ready to learn more and collaborate with other groups.
- Martye Griffin (Yahara WINS/MMSD): Make sure that we are moving toward common goals in the same way. Looking for synergy, clarification of commonalities, increased focus and consistency. In the end, it's all about getting to improved water quality.
- Ken Johnson (Wisconsin DNR – retired): Build on past progress and accelerate future progress.
- Dave Merritt (Dane County): Revisit the 50% P-load-reduction goal and what result it will produce. Shared goals are important when we all have different definitions of what a clean lake looks like.
- Paul Dearlove (Clean Lakes Alliance): Make sure the right groups have a seat at the table to broaden the level of strategic involvement. Yet be careful not to let the group get so unwieldy that it unnecessarily slows our ability to act.
- Tricia Gorby (UW Extension): Bound and prioritize the scope and issues to resolve. Get everyone on the same page. Isolate and emphasize the unique strengths and roles of implementation partners and collaborators.
- Dick Lathrop (UW Center for Limnology): Build on what we have done and learned. Focus on the main challenges and don't reinvent the wheel.
- Mike Rupiper (CARPC): Make measurable progress that is also noticeable to the community.
- Mark Aquino (Wisconsin DNR): Lakes are really benefiting the community. Individual actions are driving us toward our goals.
- Lacey Cochart (Wisconsin DATCP): Identify resources that can move the needed projects forward long term.
- James Tye (Clean Lakes Alliance): Create a true cultural shift.
- Kyle Minks (Dane County): Metrics tied to goals to show progress.
- Matt Diebel (Dane County): Use an adaptive management framework. Create both interim and long-term goals, acknowledging difficulties and shortcomings.
- Jake Vander Zanden (UW Center for Limnology): Partners are valuable in creating a good roadmap. Re-evaluate our goals and practice adaptive management planning.
- Kathy Lake (Yahara WINS): How the Compact fits with other efforts happening within the watershed.
- Chad Cook (UW Extension): Make sure this effort reflects the community and its goals.

II. Compact Synopsis

The group was asked to focus its attention on the proposed Scope of Work (pages 4-5) outlining the questions to be addressed. It was explained that this was the crux of the Compact, and that agreement was needed on this section so it could be finalized for signing. It was also mentioned that a lot has changed in just the first several years of implementing the Yahara CLEAN Strategic Action Plan for Phosphorus Reduction. With constantly evolving challenges and opportunities presenting themselves, a fresh look at our roadmap

was now needed. The goal of the meeting was to make sure we are comfortable with the scope of work and basic operating framework.

Lathrop explained that the original reduction targets were determined by looking at 33 years of phosphorus-loading and lake-response data. The annual reduction target and 50% goal were based on the difference between the long-term average loading and what was experienced during drought years when the lakes responded favorably. However, the messaging has been that we need to reduce loads by 50%, and that is misleading. While progress has been made in recent years, the targeted reduction amount has likely shifted due to climate change and other factors. This gap is likely to widen in the future as we experience more runoff and more manure challenges. In addition, the long-term average loading has not dropped even though we've made progress in implementing best practices.

Action Item: Lathrop to propose edits to the Background and Scope of Work sections to clarify his points regarding goals and messaging. He will make edits to the digital copy of the Compact and send to Paul.

III. Facilitated Conversation: Hopes, Wishes & Requests

The following question was posed to the group: *What is your vision for the ideal outcome of the Compact?* Sticky note responses:

- Manure management for largest impact to water quality.
- Partners and collaborators find common goals and opportunities to contribute to achieving those goals.
- Each agency knows what is expected of it and incorporates Compact goals into its work plan. The general public knows how they can contribute to the effort.
- Synergistic with other watershed efforts.
- Specific and long-term targets.
- Achievable goals.
- Aspirational lens of learning and evaluation.
- Completing P-reduction projects to achieve the community goal.
- Expand on ultimate goal. Acknowledge uncertainty. Diversify monitoring and evidence.
- The Compact is able to implement actions that will produce the desired benefits.
- Focus time and money appropriately to help watershed health.
- Critical analysis of Yahara CLEAN 2.0. What has been accomplished so far? What challenges do we need to overcome? What lessons are needed for Yahara CLEAN 3.0?
- Roadmap of specific actions to be completed by partners best positioned to succeed. Work plans are created and followed.
- Keep eyes on the prize and there are many ways to get there.
- Significant progress implementing the plan in 5-10 years.
- Manure management for largest water quality improvement.
- Through implementation of the Compact, the community is inspired to see the lakes as assets to be celebrated.
- Meet TMDL targets and have noticeable (to the public) lake change.
- Closed beaches and "impaired" lakes are universally viewed as unacceptable. The community prioritizes clean, useable lakes and knows that goal is attainable.

- Going to the lake is part of daily life. No cyanobacteria blooms. True cultural shift. No beach closures. Everyone has skin in the game.

IV. Understanding/Acknowledgement of Goals & Expectations

Tye started an exercise of reviewing and receiving feedback on each of the scope of work items.

Introduction

- Minks: Who represented the steering team and what role will it play? Dearlove explained that the designees constitute the steering team. The steering team is tasked with guiding the Compact's work. Diebel added that the partners determine the scope of work.

A1:

- Lathrop: Water quality goals originally based on clarity and P concentrations in the middle of the lake. However, the new game changer is zebra mussels. Like other lakes with zebra mussels, clarity in the middle of the lake tends to improve while near-shore conditions may worsen. Our original goal of looking at mesotrophic indicators is not necessarily the best measure to use today.
- Vander Zanden: We need to look at other parameters and metrics to measure success other than phosphorus.
- Aquino: Broaden the scope so it's not just focused on phosphorus and clarity. A goal state goal should be to remove all lakes and beaches from the impaired waters list.
- Larsen Converse: A goal might be to double the number of days our beaches are open. Beach closures are tracked and do not necessarily reflect phosphorus.
- Minks: Move B1 into A. Goals are as much an update to the existing plan as an addition.

A2.

- Lathrop: Did we get the benefit we thought we would by doing a specific action? Do the actions produce the P reductions and benefits originally outlined? This should not just be about adding or removing actions.
- Tracking formulas are needed.

A3.

- Griffin: How is this different than A2? Language is similar so the distinction between the two is not clear.
- Lathrop: Did we accurately account for the P that we thought we reduced in the past?

A4

- No comments.

B1.

- Aquino: A goal should be to remove all the lakes and beaches from the impaired water list.
- Moved to A1.

B2.

- Tye: Goal is to advance the watershed nutrient budget, but not necessarily solve it. What is the course of action that is needed to get this done?

- Lathrop: There is a difference between determining the P budget for the entire watershed versus the lake. What is the intention here? We do have new information to develop the lake P budget.
- Dearlove: if we are accruing P in the watershed due to net imports, then we create a store of P that can affect the lakes long term. It means we could always be playing catch up and constantly missing the mark if we're not mining down P reserves at the same time as preventing its transport to the lakes. Intention is to recommend a path forward recognizing that UW has been studying this for years.
- Diebel: There will always be some level of uncertainty with all aspects of the scope of work. Why single this out as something to just push forward rather than fully address?
- Eries: The priority should be to accomplish the lake P budget. You have to have this to create your goal.
 - Lathrop: The watershed P budget is important to address since it determines what gets to the lake.
 - Vander Zanden: Suggests identifying current gaps in our knowledge. Rewrite and examine with Diebel.
 - Dearlove: Ultimately, lake response is going to be affected by both the watershed and lake P budgets. They are interconnected and not entirely distinct.

B3.

- Rupiper (submitted comment right after meeting ended): Green infrastructure is needed in our rural areas as much as in our urban areas. That should be clarified.

General Formatting

- Diebel: Clarify in the document how all these different pieces fit and flow together.
- Dearlove: The goal of the document is to make sure we are asking the right questions that need to be addressed. It is intended more as a guiding outline than a Request for Proposals.
- Gorby: Suggests reformatting to create a logic model and framework for how all these pieces connect. Recommends a flowchart or figure that accompanies the scope of work.
- Tye: **ACTION ITEM** – Proposes the formation of a working group to reorganize the scope of work. Diebel, Gorby, Cook and Vander Zanden will work with Dearlove to re-order into a more logical format as opposed to “updates,” “additions,” and “other opportunities.” It was agreed that the working group would come up with specific recommendations that could be considered at the next meeting.

C.

- Dearlove: This general subsection is intended to identify non-phosphorus-related issues of importance when it comes to achieving optimal lake health. The thought is that we would be missing a great opportunity if we didn't recognize these issues and set ourselves on a path forward. Recognizing these as issues and making basic recommendations could open doors for future studies or funding requests to support larger cleanup efforts.
- Tye: Provided the example of invasive species threats and the lack of washing stations at boat landings. Also talked about the lack of place-based learning in our schools, and how that could impact the next generation of lake stewards.

- Minks: Worried that these things are outside the scope of a two-year timeline, but acknowledges the importance of tackling these things. The issue is in what depth and detail do we go into each of these other areas.
- Gorby: There is an opportunity for a hand-off. Many different end points.
- Griffin: Suggests moving “public messaging” (C1) to B given its importance. May want to define levels of focus or depth of work that is proposed for each question to address.

Time ran out before the rest of the scope of work items could be reviewed and discussed.

V. Next Steps

ACTION ITEM – Tye proposed reconvening the group in late August or early September. Need to have regular meetings to move this forward quickly so the Compact can be signed and our work can begin. There was general agreement that Friday mornings at 8:30 was a good time to meet. Meeting dates will be sent out to the group.

VI. Closing Round

Each participant was asked to reflect on the meeting and offer a brief closing remark.