

**Public Engagement Subgroup
UWEX-facilitated Meeting #1
September 23, 2020
3:00 – 5:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Members: Missy Nergard, Mike Rupiper, Tricia Gorby, Kyle Minks, Mark Riedel, Martye Griffin, Brenda Gonzalez, James Tye, Carolyn Clow, and Renee Lauber

Facilitators: Sharon Lezberg and Samuel Pratsch, UW Division of Extension (UWEX)

Lead or Spokesperson: Carolyn Clow

Recorder: Sarah Dance

Charge: Formulate a recommended implementation strategy for how the Yahara CLEAN Compact will communicate with, engage, and empower diverse watershed communities to support our decision-making and plan development.

Objectives:

- 1) Recommend content and outreach-coordination strategies related to Compact messaging and information sharing.*
 - 2) Recommend what specific questions should be asked of the public to inform plan development.*
 - 3) Recommend desired outcomes, methods, level of intensity, and timing for soliciting public feedback, particularly from specific communities or demographics.*
 - 4) Recommend how and by whom this work gets completed.*
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Attendance:

Sarah Dance, Paul Dearlove, Carolyn Clow, Alison Lebwohl, Missy Nergard, Renee Lauber, Tricia Gorby, Mike Rupiper, Mark Riedel, Martye Griffin, Brenda Gonzalez, Kyle Minks, James Tye, and Samuel Pratsch and Sharon Lezberg (UWEX contractors)

Anticipated Meeting Outcomes:

- Identify key audiences
- Determine level of engagement for each audience
- Determine “promise” to each audience

Introductions and Overview of Meeting

Lezberg reviewed the agenda. An overview was provided of the subgroup’s approved charge, UWEX’s role, and the goals and design flow of the next three meetings. Any recommendations will first go to the Executive Committee and eventually the consultant for implementation.

Summary of Survey Findings

Pratsch reviewed the results of the survey that asked subgroup members to reflect on key audiences and level of potential involvement (see PowerPoint). Eight of the 10 members responded to the survey.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1uTYo7Rzn-VPZTOguGTTyTLYN3180UU-g7EuJCeS4fZA/edit?usp=sharing>

Level of engagement by audience

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower	Not Sure
Ho-Chunk Nation	2	1	1	3	1	0
Local Farmer Groups	0	0	4	3	1	0
Municipalities	0	1	2	4	1	0
Homeowners	3	0	4	1	0	0
Rural/Farmland Owners	2	1	3	2	0	0
Commercial/Institutional Landowners	2	1	4	0	0	0
Urban Renters	2	1	4	0	0	1
Tenant Farmers	4	1	0	2	0	1
Builders	1	0	6	1	0	0
Lake Users	3	0	4	1	0	0
Urban Native American Community	2	0	5	0	0	1
Hmong Community	3	0	3	0	1	1
African American Community	3	0	3	0	1	1
Hispanic/Latinx Community	3	0	3	0	1	1
Compact Members	1	0	0	1	6	0

- It is consistently understood that Compact members are “empowered” to make decisions. There are a few audiences where the group favors a “collaboration” level of involvement: Ho-Chunk Nation, Local Farmer Groups, and Municipalities. Responses ranged widely for the other audiences, but tended toward “involve.” For some audiences, it is not clear whether the goal is to “inform” or “involve” (maybe the answer is both).
- Tye asked about doing the survey during the actual meeting so members can ask questions in real time and we can get full participation. Pratsch: The survey is only intended to get us thinking about audiences and potential levels of involvement as the start of a broader conversation. The results should not be viewed as a decision.

Overview of the Spectrum of Public Participation

Increasing Impact on Decision-Making and Implementation				
INFORMING	CONSULTING	INVOLVING	COLLABORATING	EMPOWERING
Providing balanced and objective information about new programs or services, and about the reasons for choosing them	Inviting feedback on alternatives, analyses, and decisions related to new programs or services	Working with community members to ensure that their aspirations and concerns are considered at every stage of planning and decision-making. We also engage their assets as partners to implement solutions.	Enabling community members to participate in every aspect of planning and decision-making for new programs or services. Community members actively produce outcomes.	Giving community members sole decision-making authority over new programs or services, and lead work to implement solutions. Professionals only serve in consultative and supportive roles
We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to your input and feedback, and let you know your ideas and concerns have influenced decisions	We will ensure your input and feedback is directly reflected in alternatives, and let you know how your involvement influenced decisions. We will engage you as partners to implement solutions.	We will co-create and co-produce solutions with you. You will be true partners in making and implementing decisions for the community, your advice and recommendations will be incorporated as much as possible.	We will support your decisions and work to implement solutions.
Fact sheets, newsletters, websites, open houses	Surveys, focus groups, community meetings and forums	Community organizing, leadership development, workshops	Advisory boards, seats on governing boards, engaging and funding as partners	Support full governance, leadership, and partnership

Choose your community engagement strategy, clarify the promise to community members, and then fulfill those promises. Engagement is obviously most robust on the right side of the diagram. This can also be read as a spectrum between buy-in and ownership. On the left side, we are often mobilizing people to support or provide limited input or feedback to our decisions. On the right side, we are organizing people to identify their interests and assets – they become deciders, outcome producers, advocates, leaders. It is about shifting power to community.

- Top line of table defines the level of engagement; middle line is the “promise” to the community in terms of the commitment being made; bottom line is the “how”
- The bottom line (examples) was not on the original linked spectrum and is really helpful.

Break-out Rooms (2 rounds)

- Exercise is intended to help us develop engagement plans for different watershed communities. This includes determining a level of involvement and promise made to each.
- The first breakout exercise focused on the three groups that members identified as warranting the highest levels of engagement in the survey.

Breakout Group	Link to Google Doc response sheet
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Local Farmers Groups	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1f4zMfBlG6Gd9N6fvmd9-Bln7hm8krR7aiEwX5Ns2O_k/edit?usp=sharing
Municipalities	https://docs.google.com/document/d/13kL-3S1PUEW-F7CqNzO0swpTlzw0T5H9COhgnx3uhKk/edit?usp=sharing
Ho-Chunk Nation	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AUZOI6ITXws7coOSdUKiGxmA8zlfvsOJ0C0k934n1xg/edit?usp=sharing
Builders	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F4oYV_eP69HyxcEkSYs3EoAp3thCzGv8jaFAinz4AESa/edit?usp=sharing
Urban Native American Community	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HiVXIRpye34oIP9li78p36E39x0NBSXtY06qvO03Ka8/edit?usp=sharing
Hmong Community	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RqGGcR_GM_U6Vnzykm-MPf7bDS0bHlkrJA_KuHtaQc/edit?usp=sharing
African American Community	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VV7NPPDFzcyf9VP7-m6f3PO8E1pJNiS85A_tHG2tbgl/edit?usp=sharing
Hispanic/Latinx Community*	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zft0iU0Eh0AzjJ7hSORiDnluqSJR86luF12xoNu0yXw/edit?usp=sharing
Urban renters*	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ctopglRCBSD_guSW5Vf26b9BvQ0UpIB8p3saBjSoluK/edit?usp=sharing

*Purple shaded cells are groups we didn't have enough time to get to.

Breakout Room Report Outs (Round 1)

Local Farmer Groups (Pratsch, Gorby, Nergard, and Riedel)

- The Compact has made multiple overtures to engage with Yahara Pride Farms (YPF) in the past. YPF wants to be involved in the discussion of solutions but not all the other Compact-related work and process. Are there farmers who we're missing by focusing on this group,

such as those who farm in the lower reaches of the watershed? YPF mostly represents farmers at the top of the watershed.

- Farmers want to be included but many don't have the time. Farmer availability may be difficult, but we need to work around their schedules and get creative in how we engage with them. For instance, a lot of farmers also serve on their town boards. We need to recognize that there may be more trusted messengers and sources of information for farmers beyond our group. Also, farmland owners are often absentee and not the ones farming the actual property. Farmers and rural landowners will want to be informed through multiple opportunities.
- Our Compact's outreach should help farmers see the benefit of the conservation measures they've already implemented, giving them the recognition they deserve. Farmers will want to know the realistic impact they can have and how much work that will entail.

Municipalities (Lauber, Clow, Lezberg, Griffin, Rupiper)

- Are we more concerned about engaging with residents in the community or government officials/staff? The group quickly agreed we should prioritize government officials and staff.
- Identified groups to do that engagement. Conversations would be across official municipal boards, groups, and representatives. We will need to make information actionable and it should be realistic from a cost perspective. Cost and the financial impacts of proposed actions will be a huge part of the conversation.

Ho-Chunk Nation (Minks, Dance, Tye, Gonzalez)

- Should the outreach focus be on Ho-Chunk community members or the Nation as a governing body? This is an important distinction.
- There should be a greater understanding of why the Ho-Chunk people were not included in past Yahara CLEAN efforts and how that has impacted past outcomes.
- The Ho-Chunk have a unique history, perspective, and relationship with the Yahara River Watershed. This is a group we have to think more intentionally and ethically about, and understand the "promise" we extend as part of our outreach.
- For the government-involvement route, it's a full stop if certain key individuals are unwilling/unable to work with us. This is an indisputable fact we need to contend with even if we aren't at that stage yet.

Breakout Room Report Outs (Round 2)

Builders (Gonzalez, Gorby)	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F4oYV_eP69HyxcEkSYs3EoAp3thCzGv8jaFAinz4AES/edit?usp=sharing
Urban Native American Community (Minks, Dance)	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HiVXIRpye34oIP9li78p36E39x0NBSXtY06qvO03Ka8/edit?usp=sharing
Hmong Community (Nergard, Riedel)	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RqGGcR_GM_U6Vnzykm-MPf7bDS0bHlkrJA_KuHtaQc/edit?usp=sharing

African American Community
(Rupiper, Clow, Griffin)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VV7NP-PDFzcyf9VP7-m6f3PO8E1pJNiS85A_tHG2tbgl/edit?usp=sharing

- Subgroup members struggled to answer the questions in a meaningful capacity during this round due to the limited discussion time and a lack of information on specific populations.
- Meaningful and genuine public engagement will be critical. All of the burden should not be placed on POC members of the subgroup to do vague engagement with ethnicity-based groups without any effort from the rest of the Compact members.
- There is overlap between racial-based populations and other groups. What is the key difference? It might be better to look at neighborhood groups. Pratsch noted that racial/ethnic categories were included so they wouldn't get lost in the shuffle of larger groupings.
- Question: Do we need to think about audiences in a different way? Spheres of influence are important. Some potential audiences may not have a high impact on water quality but have influence in other spheres.
- From the urban native community perspective, we do not want to overpromise. This group should fall under the "Inform" category first, and then we can see where they want to have engagement.

Facilitator notes:

- If we are developing a plan and don't have enough information about an audience, can we determine the level of engagement needed?
- Will we know what we can promise a particular group if we haven't engaged them in the past? It will be harder to engage groups that we aren't currently working with.
- We are more accustomed to working with those groups that have power and influence! Our own spheres of influence impact what we know and who we talk with.
- We need to come to terms with what we are doing and why we are doing it. Our subgroup is starting to come together by taking a critical look at how and why we engage. A reality check is needed on what can be accomplished through this project.
- Executive Committee members are meeting with the consultant to develop a final scope of work. They will be looking for subgroup guidance on what public-engagement items should be included as part of that scope.
- Marcus from Urban Assets is a sub-consultant who will be coordinating/implementing the public engagement work. Plans are to invite him to one of the upcoming subgroup meetings.

Action Items

1. Subgroup members are encouraged to record any additional thoughts in the Google Docs representing the different audiences. Minks volunteered to do it for the rural/farmland owners and tenant farmer categories. It was agreed that everyone could edit these documents before the next meeting.
2. We will discuss the remaining populations at the next meeting (Hispanic/Latinx Community, Urban renters, Homeowners, Lake users, Commercial/Institutional Property Owners). We will also discuss key questions to ask and engagement strategies.

Closing

- **Next Meeting: Tuesday, 9/29/2020, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.**
- Chat box: How are you feeling about the approach we are taking (e.g., use of the spectrum of public participation for each unique audience) to develop a public participation plan?
 - Clow: I like using the spectrum of participation. I think we are including too many groups at this time. I see a distinction between developing the goals and strategies of the Compact and working on implementation of what is decided.
 - Minks: I am feeling good with the approach in that I was really struggling with identifying a starting point for this topic of how best to move public engagement forward.
 - Nergard: Approach seems okay, but I'm not confident that the breakout of groups is appropriate to address the outcomes. Half is ethnicity/race, and the other half is types of users/property owners.
 - Riedel: I think it can be a useful model, but we need to dovetail in with the SmithGroup consulting team, learn from their Milwaukee experience, and optimize DEI and goals for implementation.
 - Rupiper: Great approach, but more time to work through it would be better.
 - Dearlove: Like the approach, but want to make sure it leads to a "realistic" and "feasible" direction for our Compact work and timeline.

Other Relevant Content

Flow chart of design for three meetings:

