

**SUMMARY NOTES**  
**Yahara CLEAN Compact Steering Team**  
**Friday, December 10th, 2021**  
**8:30-10:00 a.m. Zoom Meeting**

## **Attendance**

Present: Mark Riedel, Paul Dearlove, Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), James Tye, Kyle Minks, Patrick Geoghegan, Anne Baranski, Dale Robertson, Eric Booth, Kelly Hilyard, Kathy Lake, Renee Lauber, Mike Rupiper, Thomas Wilson, Coreen Fallat, Emily Reynolds, Greg Fries, Janet Schmidt, Martye Griffin, Matt Diebel, Richard Lathrop, Luke Wynn, Allison Elli, Karin Swanson, Jessica Ross, J Blue

## **Anticipated Outcomes**

Vote on recommendation to the Executive Committee:

- Approval of draft plan as a whole with edits as noted from Steering Team & Executive Committee feedback

Shared understanding of:

- Substantive edits and the process used for identifying them
- Next steps for the team and the plan

## **Welcome and Check In (Chaired by Kyle Minks, Dane County)**

Minks convened the meeting at 8:32 a.m. This marks the last scheduled Steering Team meeting of the Yahara CLEAN Compact. Patrick Geoghegan was welcomed as the newest representative from Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. He is filling in permanently for Katie Hepler who has taken a new job in Minneapolis, MN.

Lebwohl reviewed the facilitator ground rules and working agreements.

***Summary notes from the November 12th, 2021 meeting were approved as presented.*** No edits were requested. (NOTE: All Compact documentation continues to get posted to the Yahara CLEAN webpage and the shared Google Drive folder: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-BD-1Aup9SViTIXhyGadHoDVMmDB1N?usp=sharing>)

Appreciation was given to the relationships that were built over the last 2+ years, and what our team was able to learn and accomplish. Representing different stakeholders in the community, our 19 organizations came together and invested dollars, time, and creativity on behalf of the lakes that are important to us all. We made a commitment to work together to create a plan that was grounded in science; that reflected the purpose, vision, values, and work of the group; and that offered all of us within the watershed a role to play in cleaning up the lakes. We were able to listen to each other, learn about the watershed, learn about each other, and now we are working together to finalize a plan that will honor that commitment.

The Steering Team was thanked for its thoughtful and constructive feedback on the draft plan. That feedback was heard, and every effort has been made to ensure those comments were thoroughly considered. We heard from almost every member organization, and received well over 150

different page edits, questions, and recommendations -- from small grammatical corrections to more substantive edits on tone and content related to the science, the recommendations, and community outreach. Also thanked were: Dearlove for organizing and processing all the feedback; the Executive Committee and SmithGroup for determining whether and how requested changes could best be incorporated into the plan; Executive Committee members who volunteered to do additional work over the coming month to take the plan across the finish line; and to everyone who served on a subgroup or committee that helped make sure the draft plan truly reflected the vision, values, and work of this group.

Everyone was given the chance to review the feedback provided and how it will be addressed. Today's agenda is structured to allow the Steering Team to learn more about the feedback-review process and decision outcomes. A vote will then be taken on the draft plan, followed by the sharing of reflections related to the process and results that got us to this point.

### 2022 Timeline Milestones:

#### January

- An updated plan will be shared with the Executive Committee by January 7th
- Executive Committee to meet on January 14th to do a page-turn review of the revised plan

#### February

- A final plan will be produced and shared with the Steering Team on February 1st
- A Steering Team vote will be taken online to accept the final plan. (The vote will seek confirmation that the final plan is a faithful representation of our work together. It will not say that any organization endorses any specific strategy or recommendation.)
- A Steering Team celebration of some kind will be held in early February. Date, location, and other details are still to be determined.

#### Beyond

- The plan-development phase of the Compact will end with the February online vote.
- A working committee of interested Compact members will be invited to continue meeting to advise and coordinate around the recommended work, including how the plan gets rolled out to the public in May. Details are still to be determined.
- The plan and its major, high-level findings and recommendations will be announced to the larger community at Clean Lakes Alliance-hosted event on May 18th. Please save the date!

## **Compact Plan Feedback (Matt Diebel & Paul Dearlove)**

Steering Team members were reminded that they are not being asked to do a final weigh in on the plan. Instead, they are being asked to react to the current draft, the feedback that was provided, and the decisions made around that feedback. While the work is still not quite finished, this marks our last official Steering Team meeting. Prior to taking a vote on the draft plan, Minks asked Diebel and Dearlove to briefly summarize the compiled feedback and related decision-making.

Diebel explained the process and nature of the editing requests received at the Steering Team and Executive Committee levels. A previously shared Google Sheet was reviewed that documented the comments and editing recommendations. Comments were assigned categories ranging from "1" (most substantive or warranting Executive Committee discussion) to 3 (least substantive or controversial). The editing team, consisting of Dearlove, Tye, Riedel, Diebel, Fries, Goodwin, Blue, and Lebwohl (acting as facilitator), met on December 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss and make decisions on this

feedback. Also reflected on the shared Google Sheet are those decision outcomes to give SmithGroup direction on how to incorporate requested changes.

Next, Dearlove reviewed how to navigate the Google Sheet, explaining how the feedback was organized and processed within the various sheet tabs. On the “Page-turn edits” tab, requested edits can be sorted by either page number in the plan or type of edit. The tabs labeled “Steering Team Feedback Survey” and “Executive Committee Feedback Survey” include the full detail on comments provided, including people’s comfortability with accepting the plan as currently drafted. Full transparency was the main objective, and members were reassured that all comments received were documented and considered.

## **Feedback & Decisions Summary Document (Paul Dearlove)**

Dearlove presented the “Draft Plan Feedback & Decisions Summary” that was shared with the Steering Team in advance of the meeting. This included a high-level summary of the more substantive issues, questions or concerns that were raised and how they are proposed to be addressed. What the plan is and is not was also reviewed. For example, the plan is not designed as a detailed implementation manual for all the various actions, nor is it intended to satisfy all public-messaging needs. Rather, the plan is written to serve as guidance for key stakeholder groups, as well as to provide a community “platform” of values, scientific principles, and action goals that permits us to build upon prior and current watershed-conservation efforts.

Everyone was thanked for their constructive feedback that is now being used to make the plan even better and more usable. Major editing themes were outlined by plan chapter, including those related to tone, emphasis, priorities, and the suggested addition or deletion of specific action recommendations. Initials placed next to an editing decision identify the Executive Committee volunteer who will take the lead in developing or refining necessary content. Otherwise, if someone’s initials are not present, it can be assumed that it is a SmithGroup item to address. Decisions labeled as “pending” were not fully resolved and will require further Executive Committee discussion.

Also reviewed was the progression of recent and future straw polls and votes (see below). The intention of these check-ins and votes is to understand how the group is feeling about the plan as it takes shape, as well as to identify potential deal-breakers.

## Pending Votes

### 12/10 Steering Team

*Vote to recommend for Executive Committee approval the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan as drafted on 11/1/21 and with the execution of editing decisions as documented and reviewed at the 12/10/21 Steering Team meeting. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact.*

### 12/10 Executive Committee

Vote to approve the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan as drafted on 11/1/21 and with the execution of editing decisions as documented and reviewed at the 12/10/21 Steering Team meeting. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact.

### 1/14 Executive Committee & 2/11 Steering Team

*Vote to approve the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan dated \_\_\_ and titled \_\_\_. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact.*

## Compact Plan Vote

***VOTE:*** *We recommend for Executive Committee approval the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan as drafted on 11/1/21 and with the execution of editing decisions as documented and reviewed at this 12/10/21 Steering Team meeting. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact. (Approved with no noted dissentions or abstentions)*

## Compact Experience (Round Robin)

***What is one thing about this experience -- the process, results, a specific moment or action or connection -- that you are grateful for or that was meaningful for you and that you would like to share with the group?***

**Eric Booth:** Very grateful for all the analysis and expertise that has gone into this work. Many volunteer hours were dedicated to the effort.

**Dick Lathrop:** The science analysis really got at the heart at what is driving the phosphorus loading and how it is changing over time, giving us good direction for how to proceed. The implementation of conservation practices has made a difference, but the challenges are even bigger than we realized. It is disheartening that those challenges might not be addressed to the extent hoped.

**Kelly Hilyard:** Grateful for being in the room with so many amazing people. It was an incredible process to be a part of and observe. Having a clearer picture of the challenges will help the city of Middleton continue to work on these efforts.

**Coreen Fallat:** Thankful to be a part of this work and watch this process unfold. The plan really does capture and reflect our group's past conversations.

**Matt Diebel:** Appreciate learning about all the organizations that are part of this team and how they approach these issues. The Pecha Kuchas were an amazing tool to learn about everyone's story and how they see their organizations fitting into the overall effort.

**Mike Rupiper:** One of the benefits is what was gained through the process itself. The collective change and understanding are just as important as the creation of a final planning document.

**Mark Riedel:** Echoes Diebel's sentiments. Working over a long period of time as a large group with different perspectives is always a challenge, but there is strength in that diversity. The plan is impressive, and it represents a wealth of information and experience.

**Emily Reynolds:** Amazing to hear everyone's unique perspectives. I greatly appreciate the public-engagement efforts and documentation.

**Renee Lauber:** Appreciate the opportunity and impressed with the work and organization. Working with and learning from Sarah Dance [on inclusive public engagement] was especially rewarding.

**Tom Wilson:** Congratulations to everyone. Thought we were way off track with some of the early content drafts. Great job to the team for pulling this out of the mud and producing a solid document.

**Greg Fries:** Learned so much from everyone. Did not have a full appreciation for the work that the facilitation required. Lebwohl and Diebel did incredible work.

**J Blue (SmithGroup):** Thanks to everyone for your time, interest, and passion.

**Anne Baranski:** Appreciate the diversity of the group. Everyone has done a really good job of leveling the playing field of understanding, especially with the science.

**Allison Elli (Clean Lakes Alliance intern):** Learned a lot and grateful to be part of the process.

**Kathy Lake:** Really appreciate the different perspectives and tying it all together to be shared with the broader community.

**Martye Griffin:** Amazed by the process and having a common message and understanding. The science is critical and very well synthesized. The group's interactions are something I've never seen before, and we should all be proud of that piece.

**Paul Dearlove:** The collaborative mindset was inspiring and encouraging to see throughout. Thanks to those of you who went above and beyond as participants, supporters, and positive voices. A lot of work was done outside of the monthly meetings by various subgroups and committees.

**James Tye:** Impressed by the constant growing and learning from all the different groups. Now it comes down to execution.

**Kyle Minks:** Appreciate all the learning that occurred throughout the process.

## Close

Minks once again thanked the Steering Team for all its good work. Special thanks were extended to Alison Lebwohl whose role as facilitator was so pivotal to successfully executing this whole effort. Everyone was asked to please continue to keep your organizations well informed as we start to look forward to the implementation phase. He concluded with a few reminders regarding next steps:

- Early February, 2022: Distribute final plan; online Steering Team vote; celebration event. Please hold February 11<sup>th</sup> (8:30-10:00 a.m.) as a tentative date for the celebration.
- May 18, 2022: Public rollout of the plan at an event hosted by Clean Lakes Alliance
- No further meetings planned for the Steering Team. Clean Lakes Alliance will reach out to invite your continued involvement as the plan gets rolled out and executed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40.

**SUMMARY NOTES**  
**Yahara CLEAN Compact Executive Committee**  
**Friday, December 10, 2021**  
**9:50-11:10 A.M.**  
**Zoom Meeting**

## **Attendance**

Present: Paul Dearlove, Luke Wynn, Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), Coreen Fallat, Matt Diebel, Kyle Minks, Mark Riedel, Greg Fries, James Tye, Allison Elli, and J. Blue (SmithGroup)

## **Anticipated Outcomes**

- Observations on prior Steering Team discussion
- Decision on next steps for closing out the project (actions, owners, deadlines)

## **Welcome and Check In (Chaired by Kyle Minks)**

Meeting was convened at 9:52 a.m.

***Summary notes from the 11/12/21 Executive Committee meeting were unanimously approved as presented.*** No edits were requested.

## **Reflections on Steering Team Discussion**

### Highlights:

- It was not clear how many people dove deep into the feedback documentation. It is likely that most did not extensively review that documentation prior to the meeting.
- The next big lift will be the development of a new Executive Summary and how to effectively convey the most important findings and recommendations.
  - Consider adding a last page to the Executive Summary with Steering Team quotes. A great level of trust was developed among the team members and that deserves to be lauded and highlighted.
- The process is such an important part of the Compact story. It was inspiring to see all the positive votes in favor of the plan, which is remarkable given the scale of this work.

Minks asked if anything was needed of the Executive Committee between now and February. Dearlove replied that most of that time will be devoted to developing or refining plan content. Executive Committee members were asked to be “on call” to provide any necessary support to those who had volunteered for those assignments.

J Blue: We are comfortable with what is being asked of SmithGroup. Some of our Google Sheet comments are questions back the Executive Committee regarding how it wishes to proceed on specific matters. We will be prepared to incorporate information and content as its gets received.

## Discussion: Edits, Actions, Owners

### Format of content submissions

Content assignments can be shared with SmithGroup as Word documents. SmithGroup will then insert the new or revised section into the existing InDesign file.

### Title Discussion

Tye: “Renew the Blue” was developed by the City of Madison many years ago and could be a good title or tag line. He offered that Clean Lakes Alliance could prepare a cover page mockup with a new title and picture.

No strong opinions were shared about the title or cover page. The group was fine leaving that to Clean Lakes Alliance. Any changes will still go to the Executive Committee for final approval.

### State of the Science

Diebel will be making more edits to the science chapter. Multiple comments were received about the disconnect between the ‘State of the Science’ and other sections of the plan, so this will be important to address. Diebel said he will focus on the big picture. The disconnects were a result of the science section being written separately and then merged into the rest of the plan at the last minute. He will work on editing those inconsistencies.

### Public Engagement

How were the public-engagement outcomes used to shape the plan and its guidance? It was not abundantly clear how stakeholder input was used, especially in crafting future outreach recommendations. This was heard from multiple Steering Team members and warrants attention.

### Priority Actions

Diebel explained that his intent was not to add a bunch of additional detail to the actions, but to provide better clarifications, such as by offering some examples when appropriate.

### Responsible or Lead Entities

The distinction between responsibilities is often blurry when it comes to the larger “Government” stakeholder group. The plan should explain this issue, document that there may be multiple or overlapping responsibilities, and identify an implementation “lead,” perhaps as part of an appendix.

- Wisconsin DNR must be given authority by the legislature to “lead” anything. This is a barrier that applies to most government entities. A disclaimer may need to be added to actions requiring special authorization or approval.
- **Straw Poll:** Identify a government “lead” for each action using one of the following general labels: Federal, State, County, or Municipal. Include any necessary explanation or disclaimers in the stakeholder group introduction. Smithgroup to have discretion in identifying those suggested leads. **(Approved)**
- Minks: Once we see what this looks like, the County reserves the right to not have their name behind a specific action.
- J Blue: SmithGroup will add as part of the narrative that government actions may first require special authorization or approval. The government level most appropriate to take on the action will be identified as the suggested lead.

### Manure-processing actions

Riedel: Do we expand the scope and break out specific actions related to manure processing? The manure digester action is treating a symptom and may enable things to become more problematic. Simply building more digesters is not likely to solve the problem.

- Diebel offered to run any edits by Riedel before submitting them to SmithGroup. Fallat suggested that more explanation may be helpful to distinguish between regional and on-farm facilities.
- Blue (SmithGroup): Will discuss with Diebel and Riedel about how to approach manure processing to avoid a big list of sub-actions. It will be important to retain these as top action recommendations since they are tools for addressing the Jan-Mar high-loading period.

### Managed Rotational Grazing

Minks recommended that SmithGroup consult with Eric Booth about his comments concerning rotational grazing. However, he cautioned that farming groups have serious concerns about research from UW and whether rotational grazing was feasible in the Yahara watershed. There is some serious resistance against some of the current language around this topic.

- Riedel proposed that the language should emphasize converting more grain grasses into dairy rotations, not just open-pasture grazing.
- Blue offered to take a first pass and share with Booth, Minks and Riedel for comment. Dearlove suggested that he first call Booth to clarify his comments. This topic is his area of expertise, and he is a big proponent of managed rotational grazing as a good alternative to the more conventional confinement model.
- Tye said it is an important recommendation even if there are farmers who might question its value or feasibility. We have done this in the watershed, so we don't want to hide this as a potentially viable action. Just because some people don't want something doesn't mean we should play down its potential importance. Having it listed as a recommendation, even if it is not flagged as a top-priority action, may encourage a small subset of farmers in the watershed to transition to rotational grazing.
- Riedel explained that dairy farmers have been pushed into confinement to optimize bovine health. They have invested millions to do it because they were long told to do so by government. If we then start telling farmers to move away from confinement, it will just be another bait-and-switch on farmers. If that comes out as a big recommendation, it could be a significant barrier. Minks added that the type of agriculture in the northern part of the watershed is overwhelmingly confinement agriculture. This will draw the attention of many farmers and could provide ammunition to not support the plan.

Decision: The action on rotational grazing (A-02) would remain as a recommendation, but it would not be called out as a top action proposal for the watershed.

Proposal: Clean Lakes Alliance will incorporate a subset of the top actions as part of the new Executive Summary. A content outline will be developed for Executive Committee review and approval.

### Pending Decisions from 12/1 editing workshop

On the question of "implementer notes," is this something we want for the plan? This question was discussed by the group but not resolved. A point was raised that the plan, as currently drafted, is not an action-implementation manual. We are pointing stakeholder groups in the right direction with the recommended actions but not telling them how to implement those actions.

Decision: Tye and Dearlove were given discretion to work with SmithGroup to resolve this question.

## **Compact Plan Approval Vote**

**Vote:** *We approve the Yahara CLEAN 3.0 plan as drafted on 11/1/21 and with the execution of editing decisions as documented and reviewed at the 12/10/21 Steering Team meeting. It is our collective opinion that this body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact. (Approved with no dissentions or abstentions)*

- Dane County: yellow (“I like it”)
- City of Madison: yellow (“I like it”)
- DATCP: yellow (“I like it”)
- DNR: green (“I love it”)
- Clean Lakes Alliance: green (“I love it”)
- UW-Madison: Not present

## **Close**

### Date reminders

January 7<sup>th</sup>: SmithGroup to share a revised plan

January 14<sup>th</sup>: Executive Committee to meet in person to complete a page-turn review

Meeting ended at 11:14 a.m.