

SUMMARY NOTES
Yahara CLEAN Compact Steering team
Friday, May 8, 2020
8:30 - 10:00 A.M.
Zoom

Attendance

Mike Rupiper, Kyle Minks, Greg Fries, Dale Robertson, Tom Wilson, Eric Olson, Martye Griffin, Anne Baranski, Coreen Fallat, Dick Lathrop, Robert Wipperfurth (until 9:00), Renee Lauber, Chad Lawler, Kathy Lake, Kelly Hilyard, Sarah Dance, Jake Vander Zanden, Tricia Gorby, Janet Schmidt, Matt Diebel, Brenda Gonzalez, Mark Riedel, Missy Nergard, Adam Sodersten, Karin Swanson, James Tye. Paul Dearlove, Luke Wynn (note-taker), Allison (Facilitator)

Anticipated Outcomes

- a) Shared understanding of Yahara CLEAN vision and history
- b) Shared understanding of subgroup work and next steps

Welcome & Housekeeping

- Overview of Zoom basics and new virtual meeting format and expectations.
- Everyone was thanked for their patience while Steering Team meetings were put on hold for March and April due to COVID-19. Pausing the meetings was intended to allow participating groups to attend to emergency internal matters when safer-at-home orders were instituted. Going forward, all meetings will be held virtually until it is safe to meet in person again. Calendar invites will be updated with Zoom links.
- Handouts and core documents will continue to be shared through a link to a Google Drive folder.
- *ACTION: There were no requested changes or corrections to 2/14/20 Steering Team Summary Notes as presented. Summary notes accepted unanimously.*

Yahara CLEAN Compact Vision (Presentation: James Tye, Clean Lakes Alliance)

- It is crucial that we update and build upon our roadmap so we can achieve cleaner, safer, and more useable lakes sooner rather than later. The idea of a Compact is to bring more partners together to protect and improve one of our greatest community assets. About 48% of the nearly 60 miles of shoreline is in public ownership, and 100% of the water is held in public trust.
- The community finds it unacceptable that all five Yahara lakes are federally impaired for not satisfying basic water quality and recreational-use standards. Beach closures and cyanobacteria blooms are becoming far too common despite ongoing efforts. We are in danger of allowing our greatest natural assets to become liabilities unless we double down on our efforts. While recovery is possible and good progress is being made, the public is hungry for more to be done at a faster rate. A child born today should not have to wait until after he or she graduates from high school and moves away to get to experience clean lakes.
- We need a clear and distinct end goal and identify what steps will get us there. Only then will we get the cultural shift that is necessary to affect and sustain real change.

Yahara CLEAN Overview (Presentation: Kyle Minks, Dane County Land & Water Resources)

- Runoff and non-point sources are the primary contributor to phosphorus (P) delivery to the lakes and resulting water quality problems. Conservation practices are used on the landscape to try to minimize these sources. Examples of different practices were provided.
- The number of conservation practices that reduce P is increasing over time within the watershed. These practices are mostly focused in identified priority areas. Programs used to fund both rural and urban practices were highlighted. Other efforts aimed at flood mitigation can yield additional water quality benefits.
- To facilitate safer beach use, clean beach treatment systems are used by Dane County and city of Madison to create a barrier that prevents algae and debris from impacting recreational swim areas. Water from within the enclosed area can then be pumped, filtered and returned. This program continues to be expanded with five additional beaches planned in the city of Madison.
- About \$15 million in funding over three years from a variety of sources has been allocated to local P-reduction efforts. Yahara CLEAN funding is being leveraged by federal, state, Clean Lakes Alliance, and Yahara WINS contributions.
- Based on community reporting (2018 State of the Lakes Annual Report, Clean Lakes Alliance), we were recently 31% of the way to our goal of 46,200 lbs. of P reduction. We've had tremendous successes, and have fostered widespread community and stakeholder support. One major challenge is accounting for this progress through extensive data tracking, analysis, and reporting. Another is the fact that lake ecosystems are very complex, and with many variables affecting their quality.
- **Q&A:** In response to a question about manure digesters, it was clarified that two facilities are operational within the watershed. These facilities separate the solid and liquid fractions from the manure, creating a product that can be applied to different nutrient recommendations. This allows for a better application on fields and provides an avenue to export digested manure outside the watershed. (Note: Attached chat logs will reflect additional discussion on digesters.)

Social Equity Subgroup (Brenda Gonzalez)

- It is important that we develop and implement public-engagement strategies that are more intentional and understanding of how particular communities would like to be approached.
- The Land Acknowledgement and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) statements are intended to reflect our values as Compact members. There is a need to be authentic and transparent, and it will be important to avoid the checkbox mentality.
- Consideration should be given to hiring a DEI consultant to minimize our blind spots and bring the right experts to the table.

Ag Outreach Subgroup (Mark Riedel)

- Subgroup members have had multiple, positive conversations with the Yahara Pride Farms (YPF) board. YPF is onboard with the collective vision and goals of the Compact, but it lacks the staffing capacity to be able to participate in monthly meetings. Participation by the Wisconsin Dairy Business Association is still up in the air.

- As the Compact work moves forward, we will need to outreach to farmers in a manner that makes it easier for them to participate. That means meeting them on their own turf and during times that work best for them.
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program Grant (USDA-NRCS): Yahara Pride Farms is exploring the possibility of applying for this grant opportunity to support a new Paid for Performance initiative.

P Loading Subgroup (Matt Diebel, Dane County Land & Water Resources)

A summary paper is being prepared to help guide Compact members in understanding fundamental water quality concepts related to the lakes. The guidance document is intended to lay out key scientific principles and what is known about the lakes and watershed to assist with future strategy discussions. It will also point people to some of the locally relevant plans, studies, and technical resources that are available.

Executive Committee Update

- The “About the Yahara CLEAN Compact” document was approved. This one-page document synthesizes Steering Team input on Compact vision/goals (i.e., clearer water, open beaches, fewer cyanobacteria blooms) and focus areas (i.e., reducing phosphorus and *E. coli* pollution).
- Exec is currently exploring ways to effectively engage the Steering Team and the larger community in the identification of strategy recommendations, and to identify effective formats for gathering input.
- Exec is also looking at the project timeline to determine work-planning needs on a month-by-month basis. This includes discussing options for bringing on needed consultants to help manage and implement the overall effort.
- Finally, Exec is discussing needs for public engagement and DEI. This includes a plan to reformulate some of the subcommittees to create a more holistically integrated subgroup focused on public outreach and engagement.

Closing Remarks

- Steering Team members were reminded that the Executive Committee meetings are open to anyone who wants to observe them. Everyone is given access to the Zoom link and can join if interested. Also, the beginning of every Steering Team meeting is an opportunity to ask questions about Exec business captured in the Exec notes.
- A more broad-based public engagement group is now needed. Reconstituting the Additional Participants, Social Equity, and Ag Outreach committees into a broader-focused public messaging and engagement group is in the proposal stage and actively being discussed. Feel free to reach out to Dearlove offline if interested in volunteering.
- Next month, agenda items are likely to include a presentation from the P Loading Subgroup regarding Yahara lakes water quality concepts. Depending on time, we may also start to talk about strategy-evaluation methods.

Zoom Chat following the presentations and during check out:

9:08:16	From Coreen Fallat (DATCP)	I think it is critical to somehow share the message - 'This is possible.'
9:08:24	From Mark Riedel (WDNR)	Not meaning to sound contrary, but digesters don't remove nutrients...
9:09:15	From James Tye (Clean Lakes Alliance)	I think its important for everyone to be "heard" and get involved
9:11:27	From Martye Griffin (Yahara WINS)	Mark's point is a good one. a road map that involves digesters would have to be coupled with a plan to manage the concentrated nutrients that come from it, whether it is a partnership to make a different nutrient product
9:11:29	From Richard Lathrop (UW Center for Limnology)	Digesters are just the mechanism to have all manure collected and processed with the opportunity to handle the nutrients at the end process. Without digesters or other manure processing facilities, raw manure gets spread across the landscape. This allows direct runoff to the lakes, and indirectly raises soil P levels that can leach the P to runoff waters.
9:12:35	From martye griffin (MMSD & Yahara WINS)	.. or couple with required practices to eliminate runoff when you receive nutrients from digesters, or even better move it to places that need nutrients
9:12:40	From Coreen (DATCP)	Has there been an analysis of the capacity needed to collect all of the manure in the watershed? How many digesters would be needed?
9:20:24	From Mark Riedel (WDNR)	Dick, thank you for adding that important clarification. Let's discuss at our next P-team meeting
9:30:24	From Martye Griffin (MMSD & Yahara WINS)	what's the difference between spreading raw manure using good practices or spreading concentrated liquid nutrients from a digestor? I am not on the P team, but the key still has to be how it is managed on the landscape. no runoff no problem, digesters are only half the battle. what we are finding with our biosolids management investigations is that a nutrient proceduct that is easier to deal with and keep on the landscape (no runoff) is NOT a liquid product... it would be interesting of a digestor could partner with some entity that could pelletize the concentrated nutrients and allow

		for easier on the land management, shipping out of the watershed, economic value to sell, etc...
9:33:17	From Alison Lebwohl (facilitator)	If folks have additional questions or observations, please share them here
9:37:11	From Coreen Fallat (DATCP)	Do you think the county funding will decrease with the expected recession? What might be the impact on existing efforts?
9:55:31	From Mark Riedel (WDNR)	can you share the link for the CLEAN document?
10:01:07	From Kelly Hilyard (City of Middleton)	digesters- cost for pelletizing nutrients? What are the barriers, challenges, costs?
10:01:18	From Tom Wilson (Westport)	all good. Progress being made. Forward!
10:01:21	From Renee Lauber (Dane Co Towns Association)	thank you everyone
10:01:27	From Janet Schmidt (city of Madison)	I think the virtual format went well. nice job moderating this.
10:01:27	From Matt Diebel (Dane County)	The format worked well for me. It's good to see everyone!
10:01:30	From Brenda Gonzalez (UW-Madison)	The technology is getting "easier" ... thank you.
10:01:31	From Anne Baranski (Realtors Association)	Good to see you all!
10:01:58	From Mike Rupiper (CARPC)	It's great to heard that things have been moving forward, even with our current challenges.

SUMMARY NOTES
Yahara CLEAN Compact Executive Committee
Friday, May 8, 2020
10:05 – 11:00 A.M.
Zoom

Attendance

Kyle Minks (meeting chair), Greg Fries, Brenda Gonzalez, Coreen Fallat, Janet Schmidt, Mark Riedel, Matt Diebel, Missy Nergard, James Tye, Paul Dearlove, Luke Wynn (note-taker), Allison (facilitator), Sarah Dance (UW fellowship candidate to help with public outreach)

Anticipated Outcomes

- a) Decisions about:
 - Project management for technical & outreach
 - Land acknowledgment statement
 - DEI values statement
 - DEI lens proposal
 - Formation of Public Engagement Subgroup
 - Yahara CLEAN focus
- b) Shared understanding of:
 - Income & expense status (as of March 3, 2020)
 - Compact decision summary concept
 - Topics & work month-by-month

Notes from 2/14/20 Executive Committee meeting

No corrections or changes requested. *Summary notes from the 2/14/20 Exec Committee meeting approved unanimously.*

Approving Steering Team & Subgroup Work

- **Decision:** *Approval of Yahara CLEAN Compact Land Acknowledgement Statement as presented by the Social Equity Subgroup. (All in favor)*

“The Yahara River Watershed has a long history of ethnic cleaning and colonization that sought to forcibly remove the Ho-Chunk from Wisconsin. Today, the Yahara CLEAN Compact partners acknowledge that we reside on stolen land and respect the inherent sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation, along with the eleven other First Nations of Wisconsin. We recognize that the First Nations are the traditional stewards of this land and protectors of water. Therefore, as we work towards developing an action plan for the Yahara River Watershed, we will strive to respectfully listen and learn from our Indigenous communities.”

- **Decision:** *Approval of Yahara CLEAN Compact Diversity, Equity & Inclusion statement. Recognition that more needs to happen to bring in historically underrepresented communities, and that intentional public outreach is critical. (All in favor)*

“The Yahara CLEAN Compact is a diverse group of partners working to make a collective impact on the health of the Yahara River Watershed. We recognize the importance of providing an equitable forum for all communities to share their perspectives on lake use. We further recognize the importance of ensuring an inclusive decision-making approach to improve the health and accessibility of the lakes for all users.”

- **Decision:** Approval of the Social Equity Subgroup proposal that the Compact members intentionally and consistently apply a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) lens to all of its decision-making and public outreach. This includes being as inclusive to as many groups as possible. (All in favor)
- **Decision:** Approval to reconstitute the Additional Participants, Social Equity, and Ag Outreach Subgroups into a more holistically integrated Public Engagement Subgroup. Newly formed subgroup to advise on Compact-related outreach, the gathering of public input, and shared messaging. Current volunteers: Missy Nergard, Mike Rupiper, Tricia Gorby, Kyle Minks, Mark Riedel, Martye Griffin, Brenda Gonzales, and James Tye. (All in favor)
- **Decision:** Approval of the Steering Team-identified goals and priority focus areas outlined in the “About the Yahara CLEAN Compact” document. This includes the goals of clearer water, open beaches, and fewer cyanobacteria blooms, and the objectives of reducing phosphorus and E. coli bacteria pollution to achieve those outcomes. (All in favor)

Clearer water. Open beaches. Fewer cyanobacteria blooms.

Vision: All community members feel connected to, proud of, and responsible for our lakes and streams.

- We see clearer lakes with open beaches and safer water at the center of our community.
- We believe the lakes belong to and benefit all of us.
- We believe consideration of diverse voices and perspectives makes for strong decision-making.
- [Insert Ho-Chunk land acknowledgment statement]
- [Insert diversity, equity & inclusion statement]

Effective, achievable, lasting, equitable.

Path: Yahara CLEAN 3.0 is building on progress.

- We recognize that community efforts are already making a difference.
- We have new tools to help us expand and accelerate our progress, and to account for the impacts of climate change and other factors.
- We are bringing new partners, collaborators and resources to the table.
- We believe a strong set of strategies will be equitable, effective, lasting, affordable, inclusive, achievable, and adaptable. They will be urban and rural; communal and individual. They will help us nurture and celebrate the lakes we love.
- We are committed to an inclusive and transparent process.

Less phosphorus. Less E. coli. Less runoff.

Tools: We will leverage science, experience, culture change, collaboration, outreach and funding

- Our work will lead to healthier soils, cleaner water, and healthier shorelines. It will reduce the phosphorus, E. coli and runoff entering our lakes.
- We listen to each other. We bring our passion, creativity, and experience to the table in service of our common goals. Working together, we will choose proven strategies; create metrics to keep them on track; identify funding to support them; and design outreach to sustain them.

Executive Committee Work

- **Decision:** *Approval to maintain and share for information purposes, as presented, a summary of all major Compact-related decisions or deliverables. This regularly updated summary document will serve as a placeholder for a more formal, signed Compact document. The summary document can also serve as a decision record and communications tool describing the ongoing work of the Compact. (All in favor)*
- **Project Management of Technical & Outreach Components of the Compact.** A “Proposal for Completing Needed Work” was reviewed. The proposal identified a number of needs that could potentially benefit from third-party contractor assistance, and general recommendations for how to move forward in securing those services. The proposal was prepared with the premise that: 1) the Compact members had a finite amount of time to devote to in-depth strategy analysis, public engagement, project management/coordination, and overall plan development outside of the regular meetings; 2) adhering to the project timeline is proving challenging; and 3) financial resources are being pooled among the Compact members for this purpose.

Decision: *Approval to schedule a special Executive Committee session between now and the 6/12 Steering Team meeting to further discuss next steps. The special session is also intended to change the flow of meeting planning, with the Executive Committee doing more to drive the work of the Steering Team. (All in favor)*

- Greg Fries: City of Madison will need some formal mechanism to fund the Compact in the absence of a formally signed Compact document.

James Tye: Some money has come in the door to allow payment to keep things moving forward. However, we need to discuss how to formally bring in the funding committed by our various partners and collaborators. That will likely require offline meetings with City of Madison and Dane County to identify the mechanism needed for funding to proceed.

- **Income & Expense Reporting.** Need agreement that the report (generated on 3/3/20 and previously shared) makes sense and that it can be shared with the larger Steering Team. Decision to postpone discussion until the next meeting.