

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

Attendance

Present: Adam Sodersten (note-taker), Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), Paul Dearlove, James Tye, Rory Rhinesmith, Kyle Minks, Anne Baranski, Dale Robertson, Tom Wilson, Eric Olson, Kathy Lake, Mike Rupiper, Dick Lathrop, Tricia Gorby, Sarah Dance, Missy Nergard, Carolyn Clow, Matt Diebel, Greg Fries, Coreen Fallat, Katie Helper, Kelly Hilyard, Mark Riedel (chair), Martye Griffin, Janet Schmidt

Anticipated Outcomes

- a. Shared understanding of Yahara CLEAN strategies for clearer water and open beaches by reducing phosphorus and E. coli
- b. Shared understanding of next steps in Compact process, including the updating of strategies and public engagement

Welcome, Updates & Check In (Mark Riedel, Chair)

- POLL: *Which summer activity on the lakes do you get most excited about?* Results: Swimming (33%); Paddling (28%); Fishing (11%); Walking/running/biking (11%); Relaxing & enjoying views (11%); Discovering wildlife (6%); Waterskiing (0%); Pontoon boating (0%); Educational touring (0%); Other (0%)
- Rory Rhinesmith, consultant with SRF and former Wisconsin DOT Deputy Administrator of Statewide Bureaus, was introduced. Rory is volunteering as an advisor to the Executive Committee as it seeks to procure the necessary contracted resources to complete the work of the Compact.
- *The summary notes of the June 12, 2020 Steering Team meeting were accepted as presented. There were no requested changes or edits.*
- An agenda overview was provided. The objective was to review the recent history and status of phosphorus-reduction efforts, and to relate how recent progress ties back to the 14 action priorities of the Yahara CLEAN Strategic Action Plan. Also reviewed was where we are in the project timeline and how today's agenda fits into the logic model.

The strategies: phosphorus & E. coli (Presentation: Paul Dearlove)

- A brief synopsis of the genesis and status of Yahara CLEAN 2.0's 14 action priorities was provided. The synopsis included areas of success, areas in which we are lagging, overall impacts on in-lake water quality metrics, and insights on how the Compact is well positioned to capitalize on recent progress and momentum.
- Reminders: Lake Mendota is unofficially the most studied lake in the world, meaning that our understanding of the science, challenges and needs is not lacking. Even so, all five Yahara lakes, 10 of its stream tributaries, and eight of its public beaches are federally impaired. The last two summers saw the highest number of beach closures in the past 10 years.

- The Compact is not about reinventing the wheel but enlarging it by bringing more partners with common values and interests to the planning table.
- Plan needs to balance what happens in urban areas as well as rural areas. Amount of P diversions that were planned generally mirrored land-use coverage (71% from rural areas, 29% from urban areas). However, average cost per pound of phosphorus reduced is significantly lower in the rural areas due to the types of practices involved (\$74/lb. vs. \$111/lb.). Implementation progress through 2019 was shown for each of the 14 priority actions relative to their annual phosphorus-diversion targets.
- Yahara CLEAN 2.0 used nonmonetary, weighted screening criteria to arrive at the most cost-effective 14 actions. Similar screening criteria can be considered as we look to update and possibly expand upon these strategies.
- As of 2019, new projects and practices were diverting 19,500 pounds of phosphorus, representing 42% of the annual diversion goal. Trends in in-lake phosphorus concentrations and Secchi depth show that implementation progress does not always translate directly into reduced loadings or improved water clarity in the lakes.
- CLEAN 3.0, through the Compact, will allow us to refresh our roadmap; bring renewed attention to our public lakeshores and beaches; fully engage the right action dials (i.e., knowledge, projects, policies, economics, public engagement, resources, etc.); and reaffirm a clear need and vision that can drive the community will to make it happen.

Breakout Room Input

Following the presentation, the Steering Team went into small breakout rooms to offer input on the following questions:

- What seems to be working especially well, and why?
- What new opportunities might we want to take advantage of, and why?

Group 1: (Kyle Minks, spokesperson)

- Find better ways to incorporate more sustainable design standards into practices.
- Promote practices that increase soil health and that have good longevity. Better soil health will lead to more water infiltration and resilience to climate change.
- Find a way to frame or develop a picture of what the lakes and watershed would look like if we were to achieve our goals. Follow the Yahara 2070 example that used imagery to communicate scenarios.

Group 2: (Kathy Lake, spokesperson)

- Collaboration, innovation, and personal action are all working well. Individuals are also doing more on their own, such as working to keep leaves out of the street.
- New opportunities include the use of green infrastructure, and piloting approaches like cropland prairie strips and managed grazing. Need to look at codes and ordinances to make sure they support these opportunities.
- Preserve open space that can be used for the common good.

Group 3: (Carolyn Clow, spokesperson)

- To achieve the biggest bang for the buck, look at ways to support farmers in implementing practices. The Iowa model is one means of providing that support. Also educate urban residents so they better understand agriculture.
- Look for big projects we can fund using federal stimulus money.

Group 4: (Kelly Hilyard, spokesperson)

- Farmer-led efforts are going well. Manure digesters are removing N, but need to remove more P. In the future, how we manage the urban-rural interface will be very important to how land-use changes evolve.
- How can we go farther on the urban side? Is leaf removal enough, or do we need to do more? Urbanization creates challenges.
- Need to look at legacy of phosphorus in the system, as well as import/export dynamics.
- Need more citizen involvement to get the word out on how important it is to clean the lakes and address resiliency.
- Re-assess models to account for larger rain events.

Group 5: (Anne Baranski, spokesperson)

- Realtors, in general, can be far removed from water quality issues.
- The building of Middleton's retention ponds worked well and made a big difference. Need to get the word out to let potential homebuyers in subdivisions know the value of retention ponds and rain gardens. The more buyers we can get on board, the more builders will do it.
- The opportunity is to find more money for outreach. We need to make these issues relevant to the average citizen.
- Can government help subsidize more on-farm digesters to address excess manure and generate energy?

Group 6: (Katie Hepler, spokesperson)

- Getting more engagement of partners beyond government is working well.
- The opportunity is around manure management since it offers the biggest potential impact. Funding is important through Yahara WINS or other sources to make sure this is a priority. Need to look at "revolutionary patterns, not evolutionary patterns" for manure management.

Briefings & close

- Public Engagement Subgroup (Sarah Dance)
 - The subgroup met on June 30th to brainstorm the "what" and "why" of public engagement under the Compact.
 - Carolyn Clow had previously volunteered to help chair or co-chair the group.
 - Next steps are likely to include clarifying goals, better defining our scope, developing an elevator pitch for our shared messaging, and making sure activities align with the logic model and our Compact goals.
- Executive Committee (Mark Riedel)
 - Exec is looking at what resources we currently have and still need to acquire to get the work done. This includes assessing what we can do internally among our member groups, and where are we going to need extra help through the contracting of services. A Qualifications-Based Selection model is being followed to refine the process and timeline for bringing on that extra help.
 - The Compact Decisions Tracker was reviewed. The document is an accounting of important decisions that guide how we are moving forward.
 - Only the Executive Committee will meet in August.

POLL: *If you had to choose, what tool do you think is MOST needed at this point in time to clean up our lakes?* Results: Broader adoption of current strategies (30%); New solutions (25%); Community will (15%); Awareness/education (15%); More funding (10%); Better use of current funding (5%); Other (0%)

EVALUATION POLLS: *Overall, I found the meeting valuable.* Results: Strongly agree (40%); Agree (60%). *I found the content relevant and engaging.* Results: Strongly agree (45%); Agree (55%). *I had opportunities to ask questions and share my perspective.* Results: Strongly agree (50%); Agree (50%). *I had the support I needed to use the virtual meeting technology.* Results: Strongly agree (65%); Agree (35%).

Adjourn

Meeting ended at 10:00 a.m.