

SUMMARY NOTES
Yahara CLEAN Compact Steering Team
Friday, Sept 17, 2021
8:30-11:00 a.m. @ Marshall Park Shelter (2101 Allen Blvd., Middleton)

Attendance

Present: Mark Riedel, Paul Dearlove, Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), James Tye, Kyle Minks, Eric Vieth, Carolyn Clow, Kathy Lake, Tom Wilson, Mike Rupiper, Coreen Fallat, Sarah Pasquesi (SmithGroup), J. Blue (SmithGroup), Dick Lathrop, Greg Fries, Chad Lawler, Matt Diebel, Janet Schmidt, Anne Baranski, Martye Griffin, Ruth Hackney, Josh Bendorf (Pheasants Forever), Jake Vander Zanden, Kelly Hilyard

Clean Lakes Alliance meeting support: Luke Wynn, Allison Elli, David Odegard, Becky Mitchell, Brian Shorey, Kylie Thomasen, Rory Rhinesmith, Jessica Ross

NOTE: In addition to those present at the meeting, comments on the action tables were also received in advance by Laura Good, Katie Hepler, and Eric Booth. Discussion facilitators had the opportunity to submit comments in advance as well.

Anticipated Outcomes

- Shared understanding of next steps for the Compact (Sep – Dec)
- Feedback to SmithGroup on recommended stakeholder actions for Builders & Developers, Agriculture, and Government

Welcome and About the Day

(Chaired by Greg Fries, City of Madison)

Fries convened the special workshop meeting at 8:32 a.m. The Clean Lakes Alliance support team was thanked for setting up the meeting and helping to facilitate and document today's feedback exercises. Josh Bendorf, David Odegard, Rory Rhinesmith, Jessica Ross, and Clean Lakes support staff were introduced.

Agenda focus is to continue the work done by the Steering Team in late July discussing stakeholder action tables prepared by SmithGroup. Members are reminded to continue communicating with leadership to keep them updated on our progress. Our Compact's vision, goals, objectives, and expected deliverables were read aloud from the agenda handout.

Lebwohl reviewed her facilitator ground rules and the Steering Team's working agreements. No additions or modifications were requested.

Summary notes from the 7/29/21 meeting unanimously approved. Members also had received advanced copies of the updated Compact financials and draft action tables.

Future meeting formats and locations will depend on how the COVID-19 situation evolves. Presently, the tentative plan is to go back to a virtual format for both the Steering Team (8:30-10:00 a.m.) and Executive Committee (10:10-11:10 a.m.) on Friday, October 8th. As laid out in the expected deliverables listed at the top of the agenda, we will end with a toolkit that is grounded in science and in our shared values. It will offer all of us within the watershed a role to play in cleaning up the lakes. After today, we will have three more meetings in this phase of our work together:

- **Oct** – Public-engagement outcomes; action priorities based on our values testing; straw poll to ensure we’re on track
- **Nov** – Progress-tracking metrics and methods; vote to confirm that the materials reflect the work of the group; next steps for public messaging and 2022 rollout
- **Dec** – Close out the plan-development phase

Stakeholder action tables: Agriculture; Builders/Developers; Government

SmithGroup Presentation (J Blue)

Focus of the morning feedback exercise will be on the Agricultural, Builders & Developers, and Government action tables. Our intention is to develop action tables using language that is easily understood by a broad audience. Some recommendations apply to multiple stakeholder groups, so there will be some overlap. The actions have not yet been prioritized or ordered in any way. When providing feedback, we ask that you be specific with your comments and requested changes since vague or general statements are difficult to address. Blue and Pesquesi will rotate around the discussion tables to listen and answer questions.

Lebwohl provided World Café instructions for the small group exercise. Each discussion table was tasked with responding to the following questions:

1. *What do you find helpful about this table?*
2. *What questions do you have?*
3. *What else do you want SmithGroup to know?*

GOVERNMENT #1

Table hosts: Rory Rhinesmith (facilitator) & Becky Mitchell (scribe)

General

- The explanation column and “approach” icons are helpful for understanding the actions. In addition, it is helpful to see how each action ties to a larger strategy.
- The icons need a legend that explains the approaches they symbolize. Also, they tend to cause confusion when they’re not used to categorize actions. For example, identifying an

approach as “N/A” could imply that a particular action is not as important, creating unintended messaging problems.

- The action list is very long, making it somewhat overwhelming. How will this long list get integrated into a strategic action plan? Recommend grouping actions by responsible implementation entity or by relative potential impact.
- What does the cost-benefit picture look like for each action? This type of information would be useful to include in the final report.
- Identify the actions that will yield the greatest impact irrespective of cost. If there is a project that costs \$20M but solves the problem, people will get behind it.
- For actions that fall under the “reduce stormwater runoff” strategy, emphasize in the explanation column that they also help lower the phosphorus load since loading is both a concentration and volume issue.
- What types of partnerships should government pursue? Are there private sources of funding that can help support implementation of certain actions?
- The biggest hurdle is that cities and villages don’t know where to start when it comes to executing the action recommendations. Recommend an information clearinghouse to guide implementation and identify resources.

Specific Actions

- (a.) Good recommendation but would like to see more detail on the whole phosphorus trading/banking concept. Can it be expanded to also address stormwater volume and/or municipal wastewater?
- (e.) “Green Street” programs are great, but expensive. The report should include additional details and guidance for how this gets implemented and funded.
- (o.) Replace “Prioritize the environmental benefit...” with “Prioritize the phosphorus removal...” There are lots of environmental benefits, but we want to keep the focus on phosphorus. In the explanation, change “They are managed to maximize their energy generation, *P removal is not a priority...*” with “...*P removal is not a revenue generator...*”
- (p.) Remove “financing” from the sentence within the explanation. It may not be limited to financing incentives. Other incentives, such as nutrients or transportation logistics, may be more attractive than money, so it’s best to keep it as general *incentives*.
- (q.) Composting could be listed as an example within the explanation.
- (r.) What does “greatest contributing” refer to within the action description. Assuming it is referring to phosphorus loading and not runoff or something different.
- (s.) Recommend changing “collection” to “collection and processing.”
- (v.) What is being proposed to make this happen? Ex: Host field trips and project demonstrations to showcase successful actions and areas of opportunity.
- (af.) The County is spending a lot of money on ‘Suck the Muck’ efforts, so let’s make sure we are getting results that are commensurate with the level of investment.
- (ag. & ai.) What government funding methods are being proposed? Ex: Stormwater utility fee increases. Recommend connecting government implementers to private funding sources. Align with charitable foundations with shared goals and values.

- (ah.) This action item is not clear. What is the definition of “watershed risk” and what does it relate to (flooding, runoff, P delivery, etc.)? Risk is a word that means so many different things in government.
- (aj.) Focus on collecting more phosphorus-loading data during the vulnerable months of manure spreading.
- (aj.) Recommend making this broader than just agricultural land to effectively communicate overall progress to the general public. Define what needs to be tracked and reported out. Do this in a way that people will understand and care about. Link to TMDL and minimum DNR standards.
- (aj.) Recommend removing this action item or making some significant changes. The way it reads now is that by collecting phosphorus data more frequently it will help provide a better picture of how conditions are changing. That is misleading. Frequency of data collection does not drive good information. In fact, it can make it even harder to determine what is good information vs. bad information. The strategy states “Increase Scientific Understanding of Phosphorus.” Maybe a better action would be to evaluate and analyze existing phosphorus data on agricultural land and how it is changing over time.
- (am.) Once we start getting a handle on the watershed mass balance for phosphorus, it won’t be easy to fix any imbalances. Government action in this area will be key to sustaining progress over the long run.
- (am.) Good data and analysis are available. Recommend continued monitoring via existing stream gages to track how phosphorus loading is responding to watershed actions and climate change.
- (an.) Maintaining ongoing meetings of the Compact membership to coordinate efforts, track progress, and communicate outcomes is a recommendation that spans all tables. This is critical to sustaining a collective effort following creation of the plan. Recommend a government outreach program or position dedicated to helping push for recommended actions and providing needed support.

Main themes

1. Group and prioritize actions based on potential impact and/or responsible jurisdiction.
2. Highlight actions with a higher benefit-cost ratio (value assessment).
3. Identify and recommend public-private partnership opportunities.

GOVERNMENT #2

Table hosts: Matt Diebel (facilitator) & Brian Shorey (scribe)

General

- Supportive of the listed recommendations, and the idea of doubling down on current actions that are working.
- Action table needs to be organized in a way that makes it easier to use, like by topic (urban vs. ag) or the community-change mechanism being recommended (policy, education, etc.). Consider adding another column on the type of tool or mechanism proposed.

- Municipalities can be asked to help prioritize the actions and show what they already do.
- Is SmithGroup looking at the barriers in existing codes that might be restricting implementation of recommended actions?
- There is a lot of overlap between certain stakeholder groups, such as between Government and Builders/Developers or Government and Agriculture. This can make it challenging to assign responsibility. If the same action is being assigned to multiple stakeholders, it should be noted and written the same way.
- Things can easily be facilitated through Yahara WINS and its existing funding structure. We struggle with how we get Yahara CLEAN to dovetail with Yahara WINS. The Rock River TMDL, Yahara WINS, and Yahara CLEAN should reconcile progress-reporting numbers to avoid mixed messaging.
- Missing from the tables is direction on what can be financed and implemented right away. Much is being done, but we're not accomplishing our water quality goals largely because of funding or resource issues. Consider a triple-bottom-line approach (financial, social, environmental) to determine the actions that will produce the best overall outcomes.
- Using "N/A" instead of a symbol under the approach column makes the action seem less important.
- Knowing relative cost-benefit is needed. Some actions are expensive, and we should be able to know what level of potential impact we're getting for the investment.
- There are financial limits and staffing issues to address in getting everything implemented.
- Which actions represent the low-hanging fruit?
- Action table has a "lake" rather than "water resources" focus. The watershed's rivers, streams and wetlands warrant more attention to leverage the good work of Friends groups.

Specific Actions

- (a.) Phosphorus trading/banking is a great idea but tough to implement. How does this happen from a staffing perspective? How does it work? How does this fit in with the existing Yahara WINS program, and who manages it? "Transfer of rights" programs have not worked well in the past at the local level.
- (b. & d.) Mapping shorelines and funding/executing shoreline-restoration projects represent two sides of same coin. Step one is to map and evaluate, and step two is to fund and restore.
- (d.) Funding shoreline restorations to meet a waterbody's ecological goals is a neat idea.
- (f.) Dane County Lakes & Watershed Commission talks about further incentivizing green infrastructure but doesn't know how to proceed.
- (h.) Prioritizing stormwater outfalls for end-of-pipe treatment is great and has been done by the County as part of its Urban Water Quality Grants Program.
- (j.) Many listed actions are already being done by the County, including leaf-raking alerts based on rain forecasts. Recommend that the plan provide guidance for how to get more people and communities involved in these actions.
- (k.) What is the recommendation for how to fund the inspection of all major permitted stormwater facilities? This has been done to a degree, but more work is still needed. The structure is in place, but there is a lack of implementation.

- (k.) Madison performs these inspections, but homeowner associations are in charge in many places. Will they do the inspections and necessary maintenance? Currently, there is no incentive for the HOA to do this work once the property is developed and the stormwater facility is built. Infiltration basins can fail immediately. Who is following up and what is their incentive?
- (m.) What does it mean to “align stormwater control performance standards with the TMDL limits?” We already have TMDL standards, and it is unclear what is being proposed and how it would be implemented. This is not managed at the site level.
- (n.) Will the County prioritize and follow the recommendation to site more digesters in the watershed? Is there a role for a private entity? What business model are we using? Can digesters be eligible to receive “infrastructure” funding through federal stimulus?
- (o.) What does “prioritize the benefit of digesters” mean? Is there a need to consider smaller manure digesters (on-site)? What are we recommending for digester locations?
- (q.) For “evaluating alternative manure management techniques,” do we have any more specifics on this? Do we need pilot programs to test these techniques? Is the UW involved in the research on this? What partnership is needed there?
- (u.) With respect to “linking financing to regenerative farming practices,” is this supposed to be financing or another form of funding? Financing is lending. Thinking of state agencies, we don't have these programs like the federal government might.
- (v.) Maybe reframe: “...access to *support* (funding, technical assistance) to increase participation in conservation throughout the watershed.” And what is the need? Access to I&E? Resources? Equipment?
- (w.) Increasing participation of farmers in problem-solving needs to be more specific. Dane County has convened a number of "task forces" to try to do this, and the Compact tried to do this too. Are producers participating? If not, is there a specific action needed to overcome this? Do we, as government reps, need to be more active in their groups instead of asking them to be active in our initiatives?
- (x.) The State of Wisconsin limits what local government can require of developers to manage runoff. Where is the leverage to affect change?
- (x. & y.) Managing runoff from new development at pre-development rates and protecting internally drained areas is difficult from developer standpoint. Will 93% of the pre-development rate get us to where we need to go? Are there diminishing returns to consider? A cost-benefit analysis can answer those questions.
- (y.) The protection of internally drained systems is across all action tables. Might want to pull this out as a separate item and encourage government to work with other groups to accomplish it. Also, how is government supposed to minimize tiling?
- (ag.) Would be great to expand funding sources for needed water quality projects. What are those additional resources we can tap into? Minnesota gets additional revenue for water quality projects through its lottery and sales tax.
- (ah.) Explanation is unclear for what “restructure cost-share eligibility programs to align with watershed risk areas” means. Who is being asked to execute this action?
- (al.) Would be great to incentivize the purchase of phosphorus-containing products generated from within the watershed. What is the proposal for how this happens?

- (Actions related to development): Recommend the creation of more public-private partnerships. For example, government provides land for affordable housing development and includes conservation requirements. Think about unintended consequences related to policies and incentives. For example, the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act had issues and was later revised. Incentivize how? Who is picking up the tab? Will the action promote massive sprawl or more European-style growth?
- (Actions related to beaches): How are beach actions resulting in lower phosphorus in the lakes? Also, it is not clear that some of the beach actions are specifically for *E. coli* reduction given the tables' overwhelming focus on phosphorus. Clarify if the recommendations are intended to benefit the beach, the lake, or some social aspect. Picking up dog poop at beaches is comparatively a non-issue for the lakes when considering potential benefits.

Main themes

1. Organize by action category to make the tables more digestible.
2. Document what is already being done with respect to recommended actions. Distinguish between new recommendations and those that are already being implemented and working.
3. Propose what more is needed to overcome current barriers to the actions.

AGRICULTURE #1

Table hosts: Coreen Fallat (facilitator) & Allison Ellie (scribe)

General

- Categorize recommended actions into projects vs. programs vs. policies. Each requires different types of support and implementation timelines.
- Consistent use of approach icons would be helpful. Also, blanks and "N/A" make the table look incomplete.
- Some action statements sound simple but are actually very complex to carry out. Need direction outside of the table on what it's going to take to get actions implemented. Also, think holistically and keep negative impacts in mind for some actions (i.e., collecting all the manure has a carbon impact).
- To make the table more useful to agricultural stakeholders, identify the costs and benefits to the farmer. Farmers will typically be more inclined to adopt an action if they know it will save them money or provide other benefits.
- Add a percentage-increase goal for acres under conservation practices.
- Instead of solely relying on practices to resolve issues, identify areas that can be converted from agriculture to native prairie as purchase opportunities arise.
- Research may be necessary to identify critical areas where farmers are contributing the most phosphorus. Efforts should then be focused in these areas.
- Tailor the table in a way that plays to the farmers' best interests. For example, make it clear that existing and proposed incentives support the adoption of these actions. Add direct links within the table or create a resource to help farmers find and apply for assistance.

- Did anyone in the agricultural community help develop this action list? Our biggest challenge will be in getting farmer buy-in on the actions, so their early input is crucial. The success of the whole lake-cleanup effort hinges on their acceptance and participation.
- We should be making the business case for each action. Let's find ways to pay farmers to do what we want so they don't have to foot the bill. We need farmers to grow our food, and they need resources to be able to adopt these actions. The community should *fund and* not simply incentivize farmer efforts. We should be clear that we are offering solutions versus imposing mandates.
- It is vitally important that an action be included that increases opportunities for adoption of perennial cover in the watershed, like managed grazing. This is essential to achieving long-term water quality goals. There are options that big operations can use as well, such as grazing heifers.
- SmithGroup may want to connect with Lurne Brey at Farmers for a Sustainable Food (formerly the Dairy Strong Sustainability Alliance) to see what feedback they've received from farmers as they prepared for pilot projects over the past 1-2 years.
- Suggest adding "implementer notes" somewhere in the plan that provide more specifics regarding how we expect each action to get implemented.
- Is it possible to group the actions that are complementary with each other? For instance, re-order the table so cropping strategies follow one after another.

Specific Actions

- (a.) Would we also want to suggest better manure application to reduce phosphorus runoff (e.g., installing infrastructure to inject it into the crops)? How about shared digesters for smaller farms? We should be working with MG&E and other utilities to take the bio-energy and pay farmers for it.
- (b.) What are the current barriers to completing nutrient management plans? If it's cost, can we fund 100% of the cost to make it happen? How about on farms in critical areas that are contributing the most phosphorus? There are a variety of strategies that will lead to compliance without cost sharing.
- (c.) Remove the example of "purchasing hay from outside the watershed" as a means of reducing phosphorus imports. People will latch onto a single example as the best or only means of achieving this action.
- (c.) Is there a recommendation for how to accomplish this action? Also, if one farm has a surplus and another has a deficit, how can government help to facilitate an even trade where the first farmer can get paid for his/her hay (or get some credit) and the other farmer doesn't have to incur an added cost?
- (d. & e.) Need to connect the dots for people on how a pilot collection program and farmland runoff retention will work, and how they address the critical Jan-May timeframe when manure spreading is causing high phosphorus loading. With respect to the pilot, where does the manure go and what form would it be in? Specify that it is a nutrient (manure) collection program.
- (f.) What is the tool or mechanism that's going to get a minimum buffer width adopted? Will farmers be compensated for the loss of productive farmland?

- (g.) What problems could arise with relocating livestock facilities? This action requires a lot of funding support to the farmer. Also note that eliminating direct discharge to surface water from livestock facilities is already an agricultural performance standard.
- (h.) With respect to adding tile line P modeling to SnapPlus, it is a good idea but there are technical reasons why P delivery through tile lines is not differentiated from P delivery through surface runoff currently. If this becomes an action item, does it mean that someone will provide the technical and software development resources to do this? There are actions that Dane County LWRD could take to modify the P Index results coming from SnapPlus where tile lines are present (assuming they're able to identify the location of those tile lines) that would not rely on changing SnapPlus itself.
- (h.) It's questionable that adding a component to a phosphorus-loss model can truly be called an action to reduce agricultural phosphorus runoff. This would need to be paired with a mechanism to interpret the results and act upon them. The actions to reduce P delivery through tile drainage are the same as reducing dissolved P in surface runoff (i.e., draw down soil P and minimize the amount of manure and fertilizer P on the soil surface, especially at times of high runoff).
- (h.) Laura Good (P-Loading Subgroup): See comments in the above two bullets. Also: (1) The work that Matt Diebel has done assessing the runoff delivery potential of different parts of the landscape is great. Adding the location of tile lines to that map will aid in understanding the P delivery potential from individual fields. Using the resultant P delivery potential to modify the current P Index ratings of fields will help with identifying the locations that really have the greatest need for P-reduction measures. (2) The P Index in SnapPlus has 2 components – particulate P and dissolved P. For most fields, the P Index is dominated by particulate P, encouraging efforts to reduce sediment movement. Those efforts are helpful and should not be abandoned. However, there are landscapes with very little sediment movement that still have water quality problems due to delivery of dissolved P. Would welcome a project that explored whether a focus on limiting the dissolved P component of the P Index *in addition to* the current limit on the total (particulate + dissolved) in the Lake Mendota watershed is needed.
- (i.) Good idea to increase the composting of manure. There are some innovative options available, like nutrient recovery systems (i.e., NuWay).
- (i.) Shouldn't this be more specific? For example: "Increase the tons of manure composted as a percentage... through the establishment of a community compost facility, on-site composting, etc.
- (j.) Increasing the number of rotational grazing acres is not an option for some farmers. It will depend on the farm's operational setup.
- (k.) What could be done to help farmers get through those first few years after switching to no-till when crop yield might drop? They are more likely to accept the risk with some insurance. In addition to a no-till action, there should be one for cover crops which are beneficial to overall soil health.
- (m., n. & o.) Are farmers be expected to implement these actions?
- (n.) Dredging of drainage ditches can have negative impact on loading. If the approach is phosphorus containment, this action might not make sense.

- (n., q. & l.) Dredging drainage ditches, preserving wetlands and internally drained areas, and minimizing the use of tile lines are independent recommendations that appear to be contradictory. Explain how these actions relate to one another and work together.
- (p.) Providing farmers with more access to “planting green technology” is a great recommendation.
- (r.) This is an important recommendation. It is vital to not only increase participation in existing producer-led watershed groups, but to increase funding support to these groups.
- (t.) Linking financing to regenerative farming practices requires a broader effort than just working with the county. Shouldn’t this be moved to the Government table?
- (u.) Interested in seeing what other ideas farmers present for controlling phosphorus loss.
- (v.) What type of data sharing are we talking about? If it’s field-level, farmers will not be comfortable sharing information that can expose failures in how they do things.
- (Biosolids): An action recommendation and discussion related to the spreading of biosolids seems to be missing from the table.

Main themes

1. Organize and prioritize by impact. Categorize actions as programs, policies and projects. Possibly use icons again to help visually differentiate among these different tools.
2. Add a recommendation for more effective regulation and management of biosolids.
3. Internal consistency on the table needs some work (i.e., n., q. and l. contradict each other). Group similar actions together within the table, such as by topic.
4. Get farmer buy-in by providing funding assistance and lifting them up as solution-makers. Fund rather than simply incentivize farmer action; and provide a central clearinghouse for resources and assistance.
5. Targeted approach to action: direct efforts and funding to highest-impact areas.

AGRICULTURE #2

Table hosts: Kyle Minks (facilitator) & Luke Wynn (scribe)

General

- We need to change the mindset on what the watershed provides for the community. There is a service that this watershed (including ag land) provides in conveying clean water to the lakes. Clean water is a service to society, and people may need to pay for that service.
- Are the actions and explanations understandable to the general public? For example, is SnapPlus a familiar concept to people? The table is likely to be difficult for non-farming audiences to comprehend.
- These are all great things to work toward. Recommend focusing efforts on marginal, less productive farmland that we can convert to other uses to yield positive environmental impacts. This approach looks at changing land cover by appealing to the farmers’ interest in maximizing their financial bottom line. The most productive soils remain actively farmed while less-productive areas get put to other uses that have a conservation benefit.

- What is the carrot for people to implement these actions? What is the benefit to the farmer? Write action explanations to address these questions throughout the table
- This is a great wish-list, but it needs prioritization and funding discussions. How do we do these things? We have the *what* but need to get to the *how!* A list of needs by itself is not that helpful.
- These actions are difficult to assess without understanding degree of impact and cost-effectiveness. The cost-benefit question should be addressed somewhere in the presentation of action recommendations. The likely results: targeting high contributing areas and giving greater weight to actions that promote the “triple bottom line.”
- There is nothing in the table about adding and financing more manure digesters for phosphorus capture. We need a goal and more capacity to process all raw manure. Government needs to be part of it, but it is implemented by the agriculture sector. *SmithGroup response: More language on manure and digesters is covered in the Government table.*
- Who specifically within the agricultural community is responsible for implementing each action? A lot of these refer to the individual landowner, but not all of them.
- As discussed at the last Steering Team meeting, strategy language regarding runoff volumes should be changed from “manage” to “reduce.” We also need to communicate in terms of phosphorus “loads” (considers both concentration and volume).
- Recommend clearly identifying and separating out a short list of top actions (5?) for each stakeholder group.
- Which actions are new? Which are already happening and should be expanded? Could be beneficial to distinguish between the new or novel actions from those that seek to expand upon existing efforts.
- How does all this work get funded? What kind of incentives can be used to preserve undeveloped land to help reduce runoff and control flooding? Funding incentives should really benefit areas that are responsible for the funding.
- We need flexibility in program implementation, action prioritizations.
- We need a regional planning framework for the agricultural community. We have frameworks for urban areas and development, but I’m not familiar with a true planning framework for ag land.
- It is unclear what baselines are being used to generate the recommendations and measure future change.
- Legislative changes are likely to be necessary for some actions and should be mentioned.
- Can we bridge the actions between different stakeholder groups, and call out those that have significant overlap?

Specific Actions

- (a.) Optimizing phosphorus removal at the existing manure digesters is identified in the explanation as being directed to government. What sector of government?
- (b.) 100% adoption and implementation of nutrient management plans needs more clarification on what is required. Consider adding language about funding cost-share initiatives to get 100% compliance instead of just a blanket requirement.

- (b.) In the explanation, recommend removing “prepare, submit and update” and replace it with “develop and implement.” The strategy is to *Reduce Phosphorus from Agricultural Sources*. A nutrient management plan itself does nothing to reduce phosphorus unless it is implemented.
- (c.) As an example of phosphorus imports into the watershed, the “hay” example raises more questions than it clarifies. It should be dropped (requested by multiple people). Assuming that this action is also intended to address feed and fertilizer, with fertilizer being the bigger issue. A specific action proposal is needed here.
- (c.) Putting limitations on farmers about what they can import, especially if they also own land outside the watershed, does not seem feasible. You can’t tell farmers that they can’t bring in food for their animals. Instead, we need to focus of the nutrients in fertilizers. A vast majority of farms in the Mendota watershed import at least some of their feed.
- (c.) The focus shouldn’t just be on reducing the amount of phosphorus that is brought into the watershed. We should be emphasizing recycling of existing P that is already in circulation. Recommend adding a recommendation to find or create viable markets to facilitate the export of phosphorus.
- (c.) Cooperatives are selling fertilizers. If we can get them to recycle nutrients, we can reduce what is being imported. Add an action for this that puts responsibility on the co-ops.
- (d.) Piloting a manure-collection program during the Jan-May time period is the only action that comes close to dealing with the winter manure-spreading problem. This is one of the biggest problems we face, and it needs to be more explicitly addressed in the table! Also, what exactly is meant by a “collection program?” This is a multi-faceted issue that involves collecting, moving and processing.
- (d.) “Collection” of manure only addresses part of the problem. What are we going to do with it? How are we going to send excess nutrients out of the watershed and recycle the P that stays in the watershed? Is this meant to address the winter spreading problem? If so, it doesn’t capture that effectively.
- (d.) Expand this to include both collection and processing. The manure will have to go somewhere once it is collected.
- (e.) Increasing runoff retention on farmland also falls under the “reduce runoff” strategy. When farmland is being sold for other uses, what can be done as part of that transactional process to support this recommended action?
- (e.) Recommend striking the first sentence in the explanation that reads: “Capturing rain and runoff as close to where it hits the earth is the most effective way to reduce the distribution of excess nutrient or other contaminants.” This statement is debatable. Instead, lead with “Dedicating space...” and consider including “increase infiltration” within the action item.
- (f.) When calling for buffer strips adjacent to waterways, why is a fixed 40-ft. width proposed? This seems too inflexible given varying land conditions. One approach is to use crop yield data to target marginal lands instead of a blanket 40-ft buffer requirement that may not be applicable for every area. Recommend removing the 40 ft. minimum and allow for it to be site specific.

- (h.) Good recommendation to update the SnapPlus model so it considers phosphorus contributions from drain tiles.
- (k.) Increasing the number of no-till acres is probably not feasible or advisable in all areas.
- (l.) It is unclear how you “minimize the use of tile lines...” since they are free flowing and can’t be turned on and off once in place. Rather, is the recommendation to minimize the *installation of new tile lines*?
- (m.) In reference to “restore upland areas,” what specifically is being proposed? There are many ways to approach this.
- (n.) Recommend replacing “Dredge and restore drainage ditches after *fields...*” with “after *riparian areas...*”. As it reads now, it sounds like the entire field next to a drainage ditch would need to be stabilized. Since agriculture typically does not like to take land out of production, using the term riparian area may be more palatable.
- (t.) Recommend removing this action since it is explicitly identifying the county. If there is a strong desire to keep it, then replace financing with “cost share” or “incentive” programs.
- (v.) What does “make phosphorus data accessible to all stakeholders” mean?
SmithGroup response: The intention is to prioritize the sharing of data and action outcomes among partners and non-technical audiences. A mechanism is needed for capturing and sharing progress information to make it accessible to the larger community. We need all the stakeholder groups to share information at a level that can facilitate effective messaging around progress.
- (Winter manure spreading): Getting a handle on this problem is key to our success. There should be specific action recommendations in both the Government and Agricultural tables that address this topic.

Main themes

1. There are ecosystem services provided by ag land that would be good to highlight.
2. Focus on marginal lands, and maybe be less prescriptive with some actions (Ex: 40-ft buffer widths).
3. Organize and prioritize the actions to maximize cost-benefit.
4. Action (c.) about the watershed’s phosphorus mass balance is important but needs to be reworked.
5. Action (d.) needs to be broadened beyond just the collection of manure so it addresses storage and processing.
6. Hot spots need 100% funding support. Really focus on identifying hotspots and finding the funding to help those farmers. Incorporate incentive language to make actions more attractive.
7. Overlapping actions should be highlighted or called out in some way.
8. We need regional planning for rural landscapes that incorporates public-private partnerships.

BUILDERS/DEVELOPERS #1

Table hosts: James Tye (facilitator) & Paul Dearlove (scribe)

General

- With respect to all the actions, it would be helpful to know the specific problem or deficiency that we're attempting to address. Is the problem being caused due to a lack of education, a poorly designed regulation, a lack of enforcement, or something else?
- More public-private partnerships when it comes to land development. For example, the County could buy and maintain part of a property for wetland and infiltration benefits while the rest is developed and controlled by a private entity.
- Cost can be a big issue with any of these actions. Are there incentives that would encourage builders to change practices, like cost-sharing and piloting new approaches or technologies (i.e., reservoirs under the terrace to hold water)? Could government offer or require more education as part of the development-approval process?
- Half of the actions cannot be implemented by local order without violating current state law. For example, the Uniform Dwelling Code is a maximum not a minimum.
- How can we more effectively influence development from the very beginning of the process? It is much harder and more expensive to fix things after a property is developed.
- Developers want to hold costs to a minimum until the property gets sold to the eventual owner. Best way to meet infiltration requirements may be a green roof, but it's also expensive. How can we make development planning more intentional from a sustainability standpoint?
- Cost-benefit analyses are needed to prioritize the effectiveness of individual actions in terms of water quality impact.
- How do we incentivize the culture change we want to see? Leverage the fact that many prospective homeowners want to live in a sustainable subdivision. Consider developer incentives, recognitions, rating systems, Parade of Homes showcases, etc. to reward and normalize actions.
- Prioritize actions by water quality impact.
- There is no reason why Yahara WINS can't set development expectations and targets. Resulting phosphorus reductions would need to be quantified for crediting purposes.
- Compare stormwater utility fees across communities within the watershed. Increase fees by a certain percentage to pay for projects.

Specific Actions

- (a.) How is the documentation of expected soil loss supposed to work? How does this compare to current requirements? Anything that goes beyond current regulations would not be palatable to the development industry at this point. What about more enforcement vs. new rules?
- (c.) Experience within the County Land & Water Resources Department has shown that the effectiveness of these mechanical sediment-trap devices is often exaggerated and not realistic. They are considered proprietary, making it difficult to verify their effectiveness.
- (e.) In reference to protecting wetlands during new development, the industry reaction will depend on the definition of a wetland. In some cases, wetlands are defined too broadly.

- (g.) Recommend “incentivize” rather than “prioritize” the use of green infrastructure (GI). Examples include cost-share incentives for developers and builders who incorporate GI or offering credits for such things as green roofs. (Note: The idea of green roof credits has been raised in the past, but it wasn’t well received by zoning officials given the patchwork of zoning codes across communities.)
- (g.) Identify one or two green infrastructure practices that developers can incorporate into their projects as high-visibility public demonstrations.
- (g.) Middleton uses TIF policy to encourage green infrastructure in development projects. The planning and economic director sits down with the developer and asks for what the city wants to see. Developers are receptive because they want quick and easy approvals.
- (h.) In reference to amending soils prior to turf establishment to improve infiltration, this would be most effective within a 5x5-ft spot right at the end of the downspouts.
- (j.) What does it mean to reduce runoff rates “to less than or equal to DNR-defined natural conditions?”
- (k.) Why is this a recommended action when phosphorus lawn fertilizers are already banned?

Main themes

1. Explain what gap or need is being rectified by each action (i.e., inadequate policy, lack of enforcement of existing policy, educational need, etc.).
2. Recommend exploration of public-private partnerships to fund a property purchase that allows for both development and conservation to occur on the same parcel.
3. Government cost sharing or credits can help incentivize green infrastructure that goes beyond requirements. (Counter-opinion: governmental bodies are reluctant to use tax dollars in this way if it is only serving to enrich builders. All requirements are intended to be cost neutral for existing taxpayers, with TIF being the rare exception.)
4. There may be regulatory conflict with some of the actions (i.e., state law will not allow for more stringent local ordinances). Work-around: Use local development agreements and require that developers follow guidance approved by the local jurisdiction.
5. Most effective change will occur at the development-planning stage, and not after a property is developed. Collaborative, pre-development meetings between the developer and the government planning/sustainability officer can do a lot to steer a development project (Ex: Town of Westport).

BUILDERS/DEVELOPERS #2

Table hosts: David Odegard (facilitator) & Kylie Thomassen (scribe)

General

- Education will lead to better understanding, caring and empowerment. Help the developer see impacts that extend beyond the immediate project site and development time frame. Offer educational field days during the construction phase and when the project is complete (i.e., Parade of Homes).

- Make toolkit available with options for how to get from point A to point B. This can be in the form of a website with resources and case study successes.
- Capitalize on homebuyer and commercial markets that want to go green. This can be done through green-build certifications that include a water quality component, possibly through Clean Lakes Alliance. This would be like LEED, but for landscaping and stormwater management. Certify the whole process and not just the finished product, and link to the permit through a mandatory point component. Certification and eco-friendly practices then become marketing tools.
- Use both carrots and sticks to disincentivize the act of not caring. Most decisions are based on project budgets, so cost-benefit considerations must be built into the action choices. Awards, recognitions, and financial incentives can serve as carrots, and penalties as sticks. An incentive program should be added as a recommended action.
- Strategy should be to “reduce” not “manage” runoff. Wording still needs to be updated to better reflect the goal of reducing runoff volumes through increased infiltration.
- Emphasize all the aesthetic benefits that would be gained by adopting some of these practices.
- Love the action items, but what are the means to get these things to happen?
- Business enterprises will embrace new ideas and endeavors that: 1) solve a problem they have; 2) create a new opportunity; and 3) provide financial gain. Any way that SmithGroup can present actions for businesses (including Ag) through these three lenses will help the ultimate adoption and success. Basically, marketing imbedded in the plan.
- Are missing an opportunity to incorporate recommendations for collaboration and engagement between the stakeholder groups?

Specific Actions

- (a.) Similar to what is recommended for agricultural land, idle construction sites should maintain a cover crop to control erosion.
- (b.) Soil protection zone guidance won't work in city of Madison because it is too urbanized.
- (c.) This is similar or already required largely by MGO 37, NR151 and Dane County's Ch. 14.
- (f.) With respect to street sweeping and leaf collection, make it a minimum frequency vs. rain event-driven requirement. It is too easy to play dumb when it comes to weather.
- (f.) Street sweeping receives little credit in SLAMM. Developers do not depend on it for TSS reduction (only about 8%) and do it for visual reasons. This will not be adopted, and there is no way to know if they do it even if it were mandated.
- (g.) When prioritizing the use of green infrastructure in new development, acknowledge that practices range widely in cost, longevity, and maintenance requirements. Establishing long-term maintenance roles will help to ensure that the practices don't fail.
- (g.) How about a “Fee in lieu of” program that can be applied to projects where site constraints make it difficult or cost prohibitive to install adequate green infrastructure (GI)? “Offset” funds raised through the program can be used to pay for additional GI elsewhere. This can work well in heavily urbanized areas.
- (h.) What does it mean to “amend soils in project development areas?” Developers would want a drop in hydrologic soil class to justify this expense. City of Madison and Dane County

make you go from a B to a C when you develop. They would want to back to a B for this, so not sure it is justified.

- (j.) With respect to restricting runoff rates to “natural condition” levels, would want model runs to show what this means before agreeing to it. A Dane County technical advisory committee is needed, similar to the infiltration group.
- (k.) Who is being asked to “omit the use of phosphorus-based fertilizers?” If it’s the developer, then that represents a very short time period.
- (l.) Collecting leaves weekly is not possible for the city of Madison. We do not and will not have the staff to do this. Most surrounding communities will not either, and many do not collect leaves at all.

Main themes

1. It’s an issue of caring rather than compliance. Water quality concerns are not currently on their radar. Use green-build certifications and ethics codes to motivate action toward zero-phosphorus and zero-runoff projects.
 2. Provide a toolkit for execution. Increase awareness of options and incentives (tax breaks, stormwater utility fee rebates, runoff-reduction credits, etc.) through a website of resources.
 3. Communicate financial feasibility and a growing, younger market that wants to go green. Cost-benefit needs to be front and center.
-

Report Out

Large group work

(See “Main Themes” from the above discussion tables)

Final thoughts:

- What mechanism(s) should be used to generate public dollars to fund these things (i.e., like how money is raised for schools)?
- Project and practices in hotspot areas might warrant 100% public funding.
- Prioritize the best ideas and find a way to pilot them.

Close Out

Fries reminded the group about the Oct-Dec agenda priorities. In October, the focus will be on public-engagement outcomes and the prioritization of recommended actions based on our Compact values. The goal is to walk away from that meeting knowing what’s in the draft plan and ready to take these planning deliverables back to our organizations. October is also the month when SmithGroup is provide a first draft of the plan. In November and December, we will focus on progress tracking metrics, public messaging, and next steps for rolling this out to the larger community. This is also the time to vote to confirm that the materials accurately

reflect the work of the group. December would then mark the close of the plan-development phase and the start of a coordinated outreach and implementation phase.

Straw poll (Lebwohl): *Are we on track to end with a toolkit that is grounded in science and in our shared values, and that offers all of us within the watershed a role to play in cleaning up the lakes?*

Vote was in the affirmative, with two questions/concerns raised. Clow: Unsure if we are going to get there in the time remaining. Concerned about sustainability of the effort and toolkit issues. Griffin: Lots going on here with large action lists, but we're not there yet. Still need to identify the big action ideas that people can get behind.

Straw Poll (Tye): *How does the group prefer to continue meeting to get this to the next level?*

- 1st choice: In-person meeting (more than half)
- 2nd choice: Homework or independent study (about a quarter to a third)
- 3rd choice: No preference
- No votes: Virtual meeting

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.