



Lake Talk

Newsletter devoted to Stewardship of the Lower Red Cedar River Basin
www.tmlia.org

Tainter/Menomin Lake Improvement Association, Inc. (TMLIA)
P. O. Box 185, Menomonie, WI 54751

Spring 2016

EPA approves TMDL implementation plan Approval opens opportunities for access to federal funding

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the nine element Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan titled "A River Runs Through Us: A Water Quality Strategy to Recover the Red Cedar Basin." This is great news for Tainter Lake, Lake Menomin and the Red Cedar Basin.

This plan outlines strategies to reduce phosphorus in the Red Cedar Basin by 65 percent. This effort represents years of dedicated work by members of the Red Cedar Water Quality Partnership. (See list of members to the right.)

The final copy of the plan will be shared once minor edits and photos are prepared. This approval is very significant since it sanctions the plan submitted by the Red Cedar Water Quality Partnership in August 2015 and opens the door for access to grants through Federal 319 funding.

"I want to thank TMLIA for its commitment to this project, for its leadership in helping to shape the Partnership Team and to those who directly worked

Red Cedar Water Quality Partnership

- Dunn County Land and Water Conservation
- Barron County Soil and Water Conservation
- UW-Extension Dunn County
- UW-Extension Barron County
- WDNR
- Department of Agriculture-NRCS
- City of Menomonie
- 3M Corporation
- West Wisconsin Land Trust
- UW-Stout
- Tainter/Menomin Lake Improvement Association
- Desair Lake Restoration
- Farmers Union
- UW-Extension
- UW-Extension/Farmer Led Councils

for years to make this happen," said Ron Verdon, TMLIA president. "We owe the Red Cedar Water Quality Partnership our gratitude for their commitment, dedication and contributions to this project."

The Partnership will remain active and will work over the next years to ensure the plan stays on track and is adjusted if necessary to make sure our waters are restored.

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Conference features range of topics, experts

The year's Red Cedar Watershed Conference will provide a forum for farmers, resource managers, businesses, organizations and educators from throughout the area to share ideas and create partnerships for action.

Now in its fifth year, the annual conference will be held Thursday, March 10, at University of Wisconsin-Stout's Memorial Student Center (MSC).

Attendees will hear about the TMDL implementation plan (see details on cover) and local farmer panelists will discuss what is working for them. Speakers also will provide an update on Madison legislation that affects water quality. In addition, local sportsmen will talk about how impaired water has had an impact on fish and wildlife habitat. Participants will also hear from award-winning journalists who will talk about the media's role in communicating environmental issues.

Nine breakout sessions will be held throughout the day. Nels Paulson, TMLIA vice president and associate professor in social science, will serve on the panel, "A River Runs Through Us: A Water Quality Strategy for the Land and Waters of the Red Cedar River Basin," during an afternoon breakout session.

An exhibit area featuring 26 booths representing local businesses and organizations will be set up in the Great Hall and concourse area.

Keynote Speakers

The event's keynote speakers include:

Maude Barlow is the national Chairperson of the Council of Canadians and senior adviser on water to the United Nations. She'll present "Blue Future, Protecting Water for People and the Planet Forever" from 3 to 4 p.m.

Barlow also chairs the board of Washington-based Food and Water Watch and is a Councillor with the Hamburg-based World Future Council. Recently Barlow was named the first Advisor on Water to the United Nations.

Save The Date!

Red Cedar: Land, Water and
People Coming Together
March 10, 2016

Registration and Parking

Registration starts at 7:30 a.m.
Due to limited parking around campus, we recommend parking at the Dunn County Fair Grounds, located on the east side of Menomonie just south of Highway 12/29 (17th Street SE).

Tim Davis works for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Mich. He'll present "Algae: the Why, the Risks and Our Role in Taming It" from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m.

Gabe Brown, owner of Brown's Ranch in Bismarck, North Dakota, will present "Expanding on Regenerative Agriculture" from 8:40 to 9:40 a.m.

Brown is one of the pioneers of the current soil health movement that focuses on regenerating our resources. He and his family own and operate a diversified 5,000-acre farm and ranch near Bismarck, North Dakota. The Browns holistically integrate their grazing and no-till cropping system, which includes a wide variety of cash crops along with multi-species cover crops and all-natural, grass-fed beef, poultry and sheep.



Submitted Photo

A no-till planter.

Lake Currents & Ripples

New Documentary Features Area Waterways

Lake Menomin and Tainter Lake are featured in a new documentary: "Water Pollutions and Solutions." This documentary sponsored by Wisconsin Land and Water appeared on Inside the Outdoors in December 2015. The 23-minute documentary also features other Wisconsin locations concerned about water quality and provides excellent interviews explaining the challenges and opportunities in improving water quality. Interviews include members from TMLIA, Desair Lake Restoration, WDNR and others. TMLIA was instrumental in arranging interviews, scheduling, advising on film locations and providing content.

To view the documentary and learn about water quality efforts in Wisconsin visit <http://intotheoutdoors.org/segments/water-pollutions-solutions/>.

"Buzz" Sorge Receives Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award

Patrick "Buzz" Sorge, a Lakes Program planner with the Water Quality Program, was presented with the 2015 Rebecca Wallace Award at the Natural Resources Board meeting in Madison, Wis.

The award is given to a DNR employee who is nominated for making the greatest contribution toward either the improvement of relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on environmental quality issues or mentoring of staff. The Natural Resources Board created the award as a memorial to Rebecca Wallace, who was killed with her husband in an automobile accident in 1997. She was an 18-year veteran of the department who was known for her dedication to her work and her ability to bring people together to solve problems.

Buzz has been a valuable asset with the department ever since he joined the Water Resources Program 34 years ago. He has always demonstrated a passion for environmental protection and restoration through his work and his ability to create meaningful relationships with the community.

Additionally, he has fostered a network of people and resources to implement a farmer-led council for the St. Croix and Red Cedar River water quality improvement projects.

Originally published in Department of Natural Resources newsletter.

Dunn County hires new water quality specialist

Last fall Dunn County hired a new water quality specialist, Lindsay Olson.

Hailing from Eau Claire, Olson has her roots in this region and has a lot of expertise aimed at making the area's water a much healthier and safer resource.



Olson has done much for other local watersheds. She worked for Eau Claire County in the past, doing geographic information system work.

Most recently, Olson said she worked with Beaver Creek Reserve on the Altoona Lake Management Plan. It is a plan similar to the one for the Red Cedar Watershed.

During her first few months, Olson spent time getting familiar with everything and everyone, including going to meetings with community and government groups, such as TMLIA and DNR. She has done grant writing as well as securing funds for those grants.

Olson has also helped create an inventory document of the Dunn County waterways, an encyclopedia of all the lakes, rivers, ponds and creeks in the county. It also includes research, plans and water quality information for those bodies of water.

A Leap Forward in 2016



The new year started with great news for our lakes!

After insightful and dedicated work in recent years by the Red Cedar Water Quality Partnership and TMLIA, the Environmental Protection Agency announced in mid-January that it has approved: “A River Runs Through Us: A Strategy to Improve Water Quality in the Red Cedar Basin.” (See cover story.) This Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plan lays out strategies to reduce phosphorus in Lake Menomin, Tainter Lake and the Red Cedar Basin by 65 percent. This approval opens up access to Federal 319 funding. A special breakout session at the “Red Cedar: Land, Water and People Conference” (see page two) will provide an overview and details on this plan.

Also, in early January, the Red Cedar Watershed Working Group presented a new proposal that is intended to support the goals of the Red Cedar TMDL. This proposed \$600,000 project represents an exciting collaboration by the groups listed below in the description. The project: “Red Cedar Basin Assessment For Water Quality Improvement” proposes to assess the biophysical, economic, cultural, and sociological attributes of the Red Cedar River Basin. This project supports the implementation of the TMDL to improve water quality in Tainter Lake and Lake Menomin and build community capacity throughout the watershed. This project is a partnership between UW-Stout, Barron and Dunn counties, US Army Corps of Engineers, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), Tainter/Menomin Lake Improvement Association (TMLIA), West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and UW-Extension. We should know by early March whether or not this project has been approved.

TMLIA helped prepare a case study on civic organizing and participated in a presentation on behalf of the Interstate Civic Organizing Agency for the Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative (MACI). This TMLIA-sponsored WDNR Lake Planning Grant: “Civic Organizing for Watershed and Lake Management” is on track. It is a two-year project that will conclude in December 2016.

The 2016 “Red Cedar: Land, Water and People Conference” scheduled for Thursday, March 10, will provide three outstanding keynote speakers, nine breakout sessions and abundant exhibits related to improving water quality. Please plan to attend this informative event and engage with others to explore and learn about our water resources. To register and learn more about the event, visit www.uwstout.edu/profed/redcedar.

We wish to thank citizens, TMLIA members, our partners and sponsors for your continued support and dedication to recovering our waters. Your involvement and guidance continues to be critical in sustaining the excellent progress and collaboration we are witnessing already in 2016. Because of your commitment, we are leaping forward toward better water quality!

Ron Verdon

Tainter/Menomin Lake Improvement Association's Recent Actions and Accomplishments

See the full list on TMLIA.org

- Led the planning and secured sponsorships for the 2016 “Red Cedar: Land, Water and People Conference” at UW-Stout, Thursday, March 10, 2016: www.uwstout.edu/profed/redcedar
- Contributed to the completion of “A River Runs Through Us: A Strategy for Restoring Water Quality in the Red Cedar River Basin” (Lake Menomin, Tainter Lake and Red Cedar River TMDL Implementation Plan) approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, January 2016.
- Organized meeting with Wisconsin Land and Water, K-12 teachers and TMLIA to provide guidance on the roll out of “Water Pollutions and Solutions” documentary to K-12 schools featuring Tainter Lake, Lake Menomin and the Red Cedar River.
- Helped prepare a case study on civic organizing and participated in a presentation on behalf of the Interstate Civic Organizing Agency for the Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative (MACI).
- Contributed to and participated in the presentation of a WDNR Lakes Protection Grant proposal: “Red Cedar Basin Assessment For Water Quality Improvement.”
- Submitted nominations for the 2016 Lake Leaders Institute.
- Participated in update of the Dunn County Land and Water Resources Plan.
- Continued support for erosion mitigation at the Colfax Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Dunn County Highway M sites on the Red Cedar River.
- Contributed to the work of “Sustainable Dunn Working Group.”
- Provided comments to the Wisconsin Legislature regarding water quality legislation.
- Participated in meetings for Wilson and Annis Creek Watershed Restoration Project.
- Worked with various Wisconsin lake associations to restore Wisconsin shoreland zoning ordinances and local control.
- Provided support to establish the new Dunn County Water Quality Specialist.
- Supported the Farmer-Led Councils in Northwest Wisconsin.
- Received a \$54,091 WDNR Grant: “Civic Organizing for Watershed and Lake Management.”
- Supported 2015 National Science Foundation LAKES: REU Project: www.uwstout.edu/lakes
- Initiated a new [Facebook](#) presence. Like us on Facebook!

Dunn County LWCD Develops 2017 Land and Water Resource Management Plan

The Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division (LWCD) serves the people of Dunn County by providing natural resource technical assistance and cost-share to landowners. One of the ways we determine how to focus our time and efforts is through our Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRM), which LWCD puts together with the guidance of citizen and technical advisory committees.

The LWRM meets the requirements of the County Land and Water Resource Management Planning Program, which was established through amendments to Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 92.10 in Wisconsin Act 27, the 1997-99 biennial budget bill.

Looking Back, Focusing Forward

We developed our first LWRM in 2000. Water quality goals of the 2000 plan focused on planning and included inventorying, gathering water quality data, and prioritizing watersheds, working with the Red Cedar Basin Steering Committee to assess water quality concerns, and assisting Tainter/Menomine Lake Improvement Association and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for Tainter Lake and Lake Menomine.

A TMDL sets the quantity of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive while still achieving water quality standards. Other goals of the 2000 plan included designing and installing 5 miles of buffers each year and extending the Hay River Priority Watershed "Pollution Reduction Incentive Program," which provided a tax incentive for farmers to incorporate nutrient management and conservation planning into their land management, for four additional years.

The original LWRM was updated in 2007 with a greater focus on implementation. Strategies of the 2007

plan included developing a comprehensive groundwater quality management strategy through participation in the Groundwater Guardians program, improving construction site erosion control and stormwater management, reducing streambank erosion, implementing best management practices through cost-share programs to reduce phosphorus loading to surface waters, identifying ways to prevent flood damage to public and private property, and restoring drained wetlands. Many of these efforts were complemented by programs offered through other state agencies, such as the DNR, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP); and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

In 2012, we developed an all-new ten year plan. This plan was the first to directly include public outreach and education as an objective to support water quality

goals, with the first of two water quality objectives being to "increase public awareness and provide water quality education." Tainter/Menomine Lake Improvement Association has been a great partner in helping us achieve that goal through its efforts such as the shoreland restoration workshops

for landscapers and waterfront property owners and the "Red Cedar Watershed Land, Water, and People Conference."

The second objective was to "prevent contaminants from entering surface water." This would be accomplished through assisting producers with nutrient management planning, continuing the cost-share programs with our partners at other agencies, and administering the Farmland Preservation Program and the Dunn County Manure Management Ordinance, among many other activities.

Many great things have happened since the 2012 plan was developed. The TMDL was approved in May 2012,

A TMDL sets the quantity of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive while still achieving water quality standards.

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the Land Conservation Division became the Land and Water Conservation Division, the Dunn County Board of Supervisors created the water quality specialist position that I now hold, and most recently, the Tainter/Menomoin TMDL implementation plan was approved by the EPA. The approval of this plan, titled "A River Runs Through us: a Water Quality Strategy for the Land and Waters of the Red Cedar River Basin," paves the way for funding to implement activities outlined in the plan.

We are now in the process of developing our 2017 LWRM. We are taking a civic governance approach to ensure that the resource concerns and priorities of citi-

zens are fully represented. Citizen and technical advisory committees will meet with LWCD throughout the plan's development to guide the development of the plan and a public hearing will be held in the fall before the final plan is approved. We value all citizens' input and we encourage you to review the 2012 LWRM plan located on the Land and Water Conservation Division main page at www.co.dunn.wi.us and reach out to me with your ideas to improve water quality.

You can email me at lmolson@co.dunn.wi.us or reach me by phone at 715-231-6528.

Written by Lindsay Olson, Dunn County Water Quality Specialist.

Wilson and Annis Creek Initiative Seeks to Improve Water Quality, Fish Habitat

Small changes to land management and use can have a big impact on water quality and fish habitat. To encourage this to happen, the Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division (LWCD) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) recently submitted two separate grant applications to create a community-based initiative and fund the installation of conservation "best management practices" on land in area watersheds.

Wilson and Annis Creeks lie in western Dunn and eastern St. Croix counties and are classified as class II trout streams, with some tributaries being class I. After their confluence, the two waterways flow together into Lake Menomoin just above the dam before joining the waters of the Red Cedar River.

More than 11 miles of Wilson Creek and 3.4 miles of Coon Creek, a tributary to Annis, have been 303(d) listed for reasons of excess sedimentation, phosphorus, and other pollutants. A 303(d) listing means that these streams are impaired and the water quality does not meet the minimum standards set by the EPA.

Wisconsin DNR has submitted to increase the upper stretch of the impairment another 3.4 miles of Wilson creek for 2016. The impairments to the creeks have

caused elevated water temperature, degraded habitat, and degraded biological community.

If successful, the grants will allow NRCS and LWCD to offer financial incentives to landowners who would like to voluntarily install practices to address resource concerns on their land. The practices supported by these grants may include grassed waterways, stream bank restoration, cover crop establishment, and manure storage structures, among others.

Voluntary sign-up for funding could begin early this year for the NRCS funding, and August for the LWCD funding. If a landowner is interested in making improvements, a conservation planner can come out and do a site walkover to identify areas that may be resource concerns. There is no obligation and landowners can implement some, all, or none of the suggested practices.

The goal is to create a partnership of citizens from the community that will foster land stewardship through the adoption of land and water conservation practices. These actions will improve soil and water health and fish habitat in an effort to remove these waters from the impaired waters list.

Written by Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division Staff.

Tainter/Menomomin Lake Improvement Association, Inc.
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Menomonie, WI 54751

Return Service Requested

DO YOU KNOW OF A NEIGHBOR ON THE LAKE WHO IS NOT YET A MEMBER OF TMLIA? PLEASE PASS THIS SECTION ON TO OTHERS.

Become a member of the **Tainter Menomin Lake Improvement Association** and contribute to improving our lakes. Help secure our fresh water for the future!

- Platinum Membership** \$5,000 and above
- Gold Membership** \$1,000–\$4,999
- Silver Membership** \$500–\$999
- Bronze Membership** \$100–\$499
- Individual/Family Membership** \$20–\$99
- Student Membership** \$10 (Fees are waived if 10 hours of water-related community service is completed.)

Specific membership level benefits are explained online at www.TMLIA.org.

TMLIA is a charitable organization exempt from taxation under section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Lake Association Membership Application



Fill out the form below and send your check to:
Tainter Menomin
Lake Improvement
Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 185
Menomonie, WI 54751

You also can join by going to www.tmlia.org and clicking "Join Us." To renew, click "View My Profile" and select "Pay Dues."

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Email _____

Phone: _____

New ___ Renewal ___ (Place a check mark by one.)

Membership Level: \$ _____

Membership year: From Jan. 1 – Dec. 31