

June 26, 2014 – Pat and Kristin Duncanson’s Farm Meeting Notes

Agenda

5:30-6:00 PM	Potluck at Duncanson Farm and informal small group discussions
6:00-6:15	Welcome and Le Sueur River watershed announcements
6:15-6:20	Ratify mission statement
6:20-6:40	Citizen updates – Carl Guse’s property and potential project for group to get behind
6:40-6:50	Large group discussion on action agenda for the rest of the summer
6:50-7:30	Small group discussions about individual skills, resources and networks they can share with the group for future projects
7:30-8:30	Introduction and tour of CD 57 near Duncanson’s farm

Desired Meeting Outcomes

- Ratify mission statement
- Additional resources, skills, and networks to potentially help LRWN expand
- Discuss and tour three features of CD 57 near Duncanson’s farm

“The Ask” to the group

- Is the final draft of the mission statement comprehensive of LRWN’s goals?
- What does the group want to accomplish in July and August? What are future themes and activities for the meetings (example: Al Batt in New Richland)?
- What are future activities or demonstration sites and how can we support them as a group and individually?
- What are some skills, resources and/or networks that meeting participants can share with the LRWN in the future?

Meeting Synopsis

About 32 people attended the June 26, 2014 LRWN meeting on Pat and Kristin Duncanson’s farm in Mapleton, MN. The meeting kicked off with a potluck, a cold cut platter from local Dietz Grocery and s’mores were provided and participants brought a dish to share. Following the potluck there were announcements about what is going on in the Le Sueur River watershed and surrounding watersheds, where meeting participants engaged in a large group discussion for projects they may want to get behind. There were small group discussions where participants explained the skills, resources and/or networks they can share with the LRWN for future meetings and projects. Pat Duncanson and Dick Nienow described their experiences with initiating and implementing BMPs at a ditchshed-scale in CD 57, and meeting attendees were able to tour three features of CD 57 near Duncanson’s farm. The steering committee will discuss and plan the next meeting based on the LRWN’s discussions.

Welcome, Announcements, Large Group Discussion

- The LRWN representative at the Minnesota River Congress on June 19, 2014 in New Ulm, reported back that there were good feelings for LRWN and what we are working towards.

Congress participants are not committed to a basin-wide authority, but rather have the basin sectioned out into smaller watersheds, or regions, then possibly an annual meeting where watersheds/regions convene and discuss their accomplishments and obstacles.

- The Bull Run Project in Waseca County will be applying for another grant period and needs more citizen involvement.
- GBERBA updates were discussed, and they joint powers group are willing to support the LRWN by applying to Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for a *Community Partnership Grant* and then funneling the money down to us for the network's activities. GBERBA also has a program called *Conservation Drainage Dollars* they would be willing to share with the network to tour demonstration sites in the watershed, such as an upcoming stabilization project in Freeborn County. The technical board encourages LRWN citizens to attend the GBERBA meetings and get more involved.
- The mission statement was ratified and is written as follows:
"The Le Sueur River Watershed Network exists to encourage collaboration, empower citizens and nurture a land stewardship ethic amongst those that live, work and recreate in the watershed."
- A potential project for the LRWN to support is on Carl Guse's property in Waseca County. Mark Dittrich, Ag Marketing and Development Division at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, who has been working with Guse for several years, and Tina Stueber, Le Sueur River Watershed Coordinator, have been assessing and discussing Guse's property for BMP implementation. They are considering construction of farmable terraces, water storage, toe wood sod mat and j-hook. A field day on Guse's property may be scheduled at the end of July 2014 because of the strong reaction from the group to pursue this project.
- The next large group meeting was discussed with the meeting participants. The meeting is expected to be in August, depending on Leon Schoenrock's, the meeting planner, and Al Batt's, guest speaker, availability in August. LRWN members are asked to become a more integral part of planning and preparing for the meeting in New Richland, MN at a Sentinel Lake (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fisheries/slice/sentinel.html>) called St. Olaf Lake.

Small Group Discussion: Know your Network

- Water Resources Center – Ben Von Korff
- County Administration
- County Commissioner; CD 57 Producer – Kip Bruender
- MDA; Speaks "farmer" and "grant" language; works with local members – Mark Dittrich
- Soil Scientist; lives in Cannon River watershed, but has worked in Le Sueur River watershed – Gyles
- Grew up in watershed; Concerned citizen – Mike
- Producer's viewpoint – Greg Mikkelson
- Mapleton Producer; CD 57 – Dick Nienow
- GIS specialist; WRC – Rick Moore
- U of M agronomist – Les Everett
- Process design; Creative; Experience melding together water quality and citizen action – Cindy Hilmoe
- 30 years' experience in the Minnesota River Basin; Many connections and resources – Lynne Kolze
- Committed producer; great teacher; passion for river – Gene Scheffert
- Listener; Communicate ideas through writing, video and photos – Anne Queenan
- Father/Family; Responsible producer – Pat Duncanson

- Jazz/Rock – Jessica Nelson
- BWSR; Water quality experience; Many connections and strong understanding of current programs offered in the state; Landowner; Passion for the river – Chris Hughes
- SWCD in Freeborn County; Clerical experience; Lives in the Le Sueur watershed – Brenda Lageson
- SWCD in Freeborn County; Technical design experience – Senja Melin
- Long history in watershed (70+ years); Served on SWCD board – Harlan Marble
- St. Clair farmer; SWCD in Blue Earth County; – Harold Loeffler
- Freeborn County SWCD manager – Mark Schaetzke
- MnDNR; knowledgeable in toe wood and other stabilization practices – Jon Lore
- Landowner connections; Experience with conservation grants – Ozzie (David) Arndt
- Firsthand experience with stabilization project and seeing the river erode away its streambanks – Don Waskosky
- Mankato Paddling and Outings Club (MPOC) member for 20+ years; willing to share a 100 year old war canoe with LRWN at the meeting in New Richland – Mark Bosacker

Wrap-up

- There is a great set of skills and resources available to the group, now we just need to apply them
- Everyone is in consensus of checking out some demo sites such as Guse's, or the stabilization project being installed in Freeborn County
- Carl Guse's project will stir great discussion and interest in the group to expand the network and encourage current members
- The EPA 319 grant is a possibility, but there is only a 2 week window; full blown proposal with 5 pages of written information and an interview, if chosen
- We need to get to this next step of accomplishing projects in the network, whether big or small
- What is the next step for a site check at Guse's property? Anne Queenan, Mark Dittrich, Tina Stueber, and Carl Guse will have a meeting in the near future to discuss what is going on and what the possibilities are for the property
- We should be thinking about how we can get behind other organizations to motivate groups that have ability to offer grants, etc.

Pat Duncanson and Dick Nienow Presentation on CD 57 and Tour

A short film on CD 57 produced by Queenan Productions introduced LRWN to the project, and was followed by Duncanson's and Nienow's description of their experiences with the project from Day 1. Nienow was skeptical about the project initially, and knowing what he knows now he feels that he would have likely done more. Duncanson has been an advocate for the project since the beginning and continues to speak to anyone that will listen to him about the value of CD 57 for the watershed and his community. Some citizens believed that tiling was better than ditching. Having a steering committee and engineering group with local knowledge was essential to make CD 57 a reality. Once everyone had a say and stake in the project through cost-sharing, the efforts were more effective because no single person was responsible. Political power was another essential component to completing the project because legislation is needed to make more changes that allow citizens to better understand the value in implementing these practices. There have been considerable reductions in TSS, P and N in the water flowing through the ditchshed, and increased water storage, while no net increase in water leaving the land. LCMR was a competitive grant because agencies were also applying for their money, and the grant only paid for the construction of conservation practices and the ditch was being constructed

simultaneously. A third of the money went towards research and documentation. They are now trying to find funding to extend monitoring of CD 57, because currently the funds only allow for the first three years to be funded.

Potential Next Meetings

July – Steering Committee meeting to discuss what needs to be done for the next large group meeting. Roles to prepare for the meeting need to be delegated out to the citizens and steering committee.

End of July – Field day at Carl Guse’s property. Keep it small though, and just reach out to current committed people, possibly just the steering committee.

August – Event in New Richland, St. Olaf Lake, with guest speaker Al Batt needs to be determined. Middle of August, when Kim Musser returns, and Al Batt is available. Steering Committee and Leon Schoenrock need to meet and discuss what needs to be done for the meeting and how LRWN can help.