

Summary of Visioning Input at September 6, 2014 "Confluence" (First Conversation)

1. Watershed Education

Group Visioning: Media education; Enlist High schools ; Market Buffer Zones; Counter Apathy/Foster Personal Ownership; Field Demonstrations; Internet videos

Scoring: 39 + 18 + 11 = 68 Total Pts. = **Rank 4 of 5**

Break-Out: Lead by Deb Anderson

Promote media (-based) education: Via journalism and local media stories; You Tube and other similar internet videos; Linkage of group websites; Post daily watershed events; Live feeds from river cameras

Create awareness of "What watershed am I in?": Find and distribute all maps, activities, curricula

Environmental educative initiative in High Schools: Connect with local colleges and universities

Promote awareness: Aesthetics, reduce apathy; create personal ownership via buffer zones and conservation easements

Regional Conferences: Share data on water quality and quantity data, and GIS mapping; share in-put on water issues, legislative initiatives, with stakeholder input from public, County, State, Federal, Tribal.

Field Trips: Hands-on tours, demonstrations, work-shops. Emphasize- success stories, Namekagon River and other watersheds

Pratt Comments: This section was done perfectly in that initial visioning concentrated mainly on objectives and break-out drilled down on the action strategies for those delineated objectives. Note that NRP is already very active on watershed awareness and high school initiatives. Promoting more personal ownership and awareness through the media, and especially the internet is fertile ground at both the intra- and inter-watershed level. The linkage of all group websites and some sort of intra-group daily calendar or summary of all regional watershed events is fantastic! So is the idea for real time river web-cam. What better site for a river web-cam than the Leonard Gage? The ad hoc addition of "Regional Conferences" in this break-out endorses of continuation of the "Confluence Conversation" while expanding the scope and the audience of stake-holders.

2. Legislative

Aggressive enforcement; Property tax incentives/reform; Advocacy; Riverway expansion; Land permit tracking; Re-ignite environmental initiative

Scoring: 45 + 20 + 14 = 79 = Total points = **Rank 3 of 5**

Break -Out: Lead by Paul Demain

Identify contacts (Who are they?): Develop a contact hand-out for all State, County, Local government and committee contacts

Personalized approached to Legislators and government leaders: Develop a training session on most effective strategies. Personalized versus collective science-based. Contacts via letters, Town meetings, and especially straight one on one.

Develop "White Papers" on key issues: (I presume here that this would be an inter-watershed initiative to promote unity on Regional issues?)

Incentive Oriented Actions: Promote tax equity and land-owner incentives for watershed friendly actions(s). (This is my own re-wording). The 40% agricultural status and special tax incentives given to agriculture and NOT other, more watershed-friendly, land uses is a real disincentive.

Aggressive Enforcement: Track WDNR and County land-use permits.

Plan Initiative: Expansion of Riverway designation.

Pratt Comment: We should contact Paul regarding exactly what is meant by "white papers". Otherwise strong sentiment for legislating stronger tax incentives for watershed -friendly, land use, is a key point. I went to an excellent training session on effective contact with legislators sponsored by the River Alliance at the 2014 Wisconsin State T.U. meeting. Maybe we can sponsor that up here? On the NRP front- we are going to need to get a definitive answer from NPS on surrogate species and beaver control. If the answer is "No" then legislative initiative may be needed- In the same vein with Riverway expansion on the Upper St. Croix. COLA will be making their TMDL study common knowledge after Agency review and approval. This should be done by Oct. 1. Stay tuned, since as an Impaired Water this will have the full force of the Federal, Clean Water Act. And it should have the full endorsement of all the other, regional, water and watershed groups, too.

3. Organizational Structure

Group Visioning: Networking/Partnership; Regional collaboration; Enlist more key stakeholders; (involve)Media; Regional membership; M.O.U. ; Funding; Centralized Grant writing

Scoring: 18 + 18 + 7 = 43 Total points = **Rank 5 of 5**

Break-Out: Lead by Ron Hobart

Schedule another meeting

Identify stakeholders: Including a roster of expertise (which can be shared), face to face to build relationships.

Lose the photo of the dam: A very specific action item which NRP can implement immediately. We were aware that it was sending all the wrong messages (except "head-waters"). Now we have a strong regional sentiment to justify changing it. Something which features natural river or real watershed or both. Do it.

Media (Partial listing of contacts and resources includes): SC Record, "Visitor", Libraries, Museums, Tavern Owners Assoc., Websites, email, NWRPC (Jason Lowman and Sheldon Johnson), Ken Maki (Hayward), Max Ericsson (Minong), Paul Delong (Wi. (Indianhead?)), Kathy Dean Moore (OR- what/who is that?)

Leonard Gage- Ask St Croix for funding (I separated this one out from Media, ad hoc)

Marketing Plan- Include vision for protecting the watershed, funding for preservation (and management?) efforts; "Banner Ad-Ad"-ask for groups interested in protecting the watershed.

Pratt Comment: I was surprised that Organization scored last, since isn't that really the first step to effective networking and partnering? The good news is that it may show that all the parties agree but want to jump start to solving real watershed issues. All well and good, but we need

some sort of structure and operating procedure if we are going to function effectively, inter-watershed. That must be where the break-out bullet: "Another Meeting" is coming from. Let's put some organizational flesh and bones on the inter-watershed function. The break-out is sort of confusing and Hobbie will need to clarify. The main point though: That Organization going to take more "conversation". The Marketing Plan is great stuff except I am confused on the listed detail, especially the "Banner" part. Maybe Ron can clarify? I took the liberty of splitting out Leonard Gage as its own highlight here. The clock is ticking! Glad to see LSG, at least, listed.

4. Science-Based Plans

Group Visioning: Climate Change; Demographics; Conservation Easement

Scoring: 45 + 30 + 10 = 85 Total points = **Rank 1 of 5**

Break-Out: Lead by Roger Dreher

Inventory Studies/Plans- Within watershed, especially Namekagon. There is a lot of good information already out there which is not being used?

Determine status (of those studies and plans) and implement

Continue LSG

Complete Comprehensive watershed plans at County level: Sawyer County and Ashland Counties (which includes much of the Upper Namekagon) and much of the Upper Chippewa is scheduled for completion in 2015. For NRP Washburn County is the critical future need. Bayfield has been done and is available. Douglas? (Much of Totogatic drainage).

Groundwater flow and temperature studies: Quantity, quality, direction and magnitude of flow. All the watershed maps are based on surface elevations and surface run-off. Not always a good indicator of groundwater watershed boundaries, especially at the outside perimeter, as evidenced in the Upper St. Croix/Brule.

Forest Type : Need to research or study existing research on how forest types influence run-off/groundwater balance. What is the best forest type for "watershed" values? Is it the same or different from those which have wood-fiber, wildlife, or recreation objectives? We already know that aspen clear-cut, is not a good fit for low-gradient, cold-water tributaries of the type we typically have in Wisconsin and the Namekagon watershed.

Pratt Comment: Scott and I both participated in this break-out. The emphasis on data-data-data and inventorying all the Plans which are already out there, I think, is dead on the money. Where watershed plans do not exist, that will be number one priority. Not to sound like a broken record- but the Fishery management Plan is very much a watershed plan and should be treated and acknowledged as such. This is probably the place to follow-up and ask the question which Lenroot Town Chairman, Dan Dums, asked in the group visioning session: "Where is the Park Service and the DNR, and why are they not here"? Not to point any fingers but that needs to be corrected going into "Conversation Two." Glad to see that research on forest type and watershed protection came up in this discussion. And there is LSG again!

5. Land Use

Group Visioning: Run-off; Mowing; AIS; Chemical; Run-off/Groundwater; Aesthetics; Conservation Easements

Scoring: = 36 + 30 + 15 = 81 Total pts. = **Rank 2 of 5**

Break-Out: Lead by Waldo Asp

Slow No-wake: Yes, but if good buffer zones are in place, the shoreline is well-armored against erosion.

Packets to New Land-Owners: Excellent. Defining "good citizen" in a watershed sense.

Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP)

Encourage Reporting (Of violations??) Overlaps with “Legal” section

Retain road-edge vegetation- road mowing should be limited

Buffer Zone (I added this because it is such an obvious omission)

Forest Management Plans (I added this because it is such an obvious omission)- Overlaps with “Science” category

Comprehensive Plans- See comments in “Science” section.

Pratt Comment: I created sort of a catch-all grouping here. Not a very good one either, since many probably would not have included AIS, or even made AIS a separate grouping. By the same token, I might break-out “Climate Change” and make it a separate category under the acronym AIC. Some might say that Land Use is AIS because the main determiner of land use is man, and man is the ultimate AIS? At any rate, this is a very artificial and subjective category to begin with. I labeled it “Land Use” because it is my personal belief that “Land Use” is what watershed is all about. Hence it needs to be a category. Anyone who disagrees- we can take it up at the September NRP Board Meeting and in subsequent inter-watershed “Conversations”. The break-out group seems to have run out of time and therefore did not come up with a very comprehensive list of strategies here. **So let the Rank (Number 2) speak for itself.** Land is an exceptionally important part of the watershed equation. So, we need to provide more strategic detail in our future discussions.