

February 2023 Quarterly Report
Farmer-Led Watershed Council Coordinator
Tara Daun
Hired on 5/17/21 @ .9 FTE
Reported on 2/13/23

Council Activities:

- Council Meetings
 - Hay River: Held council meetings in January & February
 - Planned incentives for 2023 – will be focused on more continuing education and field days
 - Trying to increase local engagement by holding incentive updates earlier and having a sign-up meeting 3/27/23
 - New county staff partnership with Tina Barone of Dunn county instead of Amanda Hanson.
 - Dry Run: Held a council meeting in January
 - Directed incentive program to be finalized and mailed out in February.
 - Considering a buffer event for summer to help people see them more.
 - Have a new farmer (organic) who is getting active at meetings.
 - Participating in NOPP (nitrogen optimization pilot program).
 - Horse Creek: Held a council meeting in January
 - Planning an event for 3/23/23 focused on nitrogen management.
 - They are looking at doing more with streambank stabilization and engineering practices for incentives and projects.
 - Participating in NOPP
 - South Kinni: Held a council meeting in January & February
 - Planning an annual meeting with speaker on 3/9/23
 - They are working more with local groups – GROWW for pollinator projects, UWRF research support, local FFA potential
- Hosted Events
 - Regional Get-Together in New Richmond – 136 registered focused on panels over speakers and highlighting networking time.
 - Precision Agriculture event in Prescott co-hosted with BP Ag.
 - Hay River hosted a Livestock Night on January 24th at a small town hall. 20 people attended and we had great feedback.

Outreach Activities

- Presentations to other groups
 - Presented on climate change & FLWCs at Groundswell.
 - Presented to roughly 50 people at the Northwest Beef Producers Association on soil health and FLWCs – got great feedback.
 - Interview with Stephanie of Midwest Farm Report on the Horse Creek trial data and profitability. <https://omny.fm/shows/mid-west-farm-report-madison/horse-creek-releases-eighth-year-of-results>

- Partnership building
 - Met with GROWW (Grassroots Organizers of Western Wisconsin) about pollinator awareness campaign.
 - Attendance at WWCC (Western Wisconsin Conservation Council) annual meeting where one of my Horse Creek farmers spoke and Horse Creek demo site research was highlighted.
 - Working with IWI (International Water Institute) to find farmers to try their Field Stewardship Rating – no farmers signed up so far
 - Worked with Extension on support for autonomous cover crop vehicles.
 - Worked with UWRF staff to support pollinator research strips, NOPP grant, and drone research.
 - Attended Producer-Led and Cover Crop Conference & Discovery Farms Conference in Wisconsin Dells.
 - Attended Red Cedar Conservation Farmers education day on biologicals in Colfax – working more closely with this council to connect them with Hay River farmers more.
 - Met with Chase Cummings and Tina Barone to shore up some partnership gaps with Dunn county.
 - Met with St. Croix county to get a better picture of their nitrogen research and consider how we could package the messaging for public consumption.
 - Attended the Wisconsin Corn & Soybean Expo – this was a very interesting event and a great opportunity to network with conventional farmers with very limited interest in (and some antipathy towards) conservation.
 - Connected to new LSP livestock specialist, Caleb Langworthy, and new RC&D grazing specialist, Chris Johnson. We are working on getting a better picture of all of the people working on grazing in the area, trying to consolidate efforts.

- Virtual outreach has continued with continued updates to the website, quarterly e-newsletter and facebook.
 - Newsletter has 336 subscribers.
 - Winter newsletter went out in December with a 52% open rate
 - Another newsletter will be going out in March
 - Website had 655 views in the last 90 days
 - Facebook presence is maintained, followers up to 408
 - We continue to get good feedback from the farmers on our Facebook page
 - 2900 impressions in the last 90 days (up 29% from previous 90 days according to Facebook).

Plans for Winter/Spring

Beyond continuing with the work listed above, I am working on the following projects that I hope will occur within the next 6 months.

- Speaking Events
 - CAFO and large operators event in Menomonie on 2/24

- Red Cedar Conference in March
- Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Association Presentation in April
- Earth Fest in River Falls in April
- UWRF Ag day
- St. Croix conservation partners meeting 3/7
- Will attend Rice Creek Cover Crop research presentation in Faribault, MN on 3/21
- Hosted Events
 - Livestock events hosted by Hay River
 - South Kinni annual meeting on 3/9
 - Horse Creek research presentation on 3/23
 - Incentive sign-up kick-off party 3/27