

Interim Progress Report

Aug 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Lake St. Croix TMDL Civic Engagement Initiative- St. Croix Co

Project Activities:

St. Croix County Water Network (SCCWN) is a partnership to improve water quality in Lake St. Croix. The SCCWN develops the civic leadership necessary to increase capacity and sustain purposeful partnerships for the common good of improving water quality in Lake St. Croix. As 2021 strategic planning has been underway within SCCWN, implementing and planning education and outreach events have been an important topic. Although the pandemic had put a damper on education and outreach types of events in 2020, we are eager to jump in them in 2021. Planning is underway for the farmers to visit Lake Mallalieu, and for landowners on Lake Mallalieu to visit and learn about farming. These are planned for the summer of 2021. The SCCWN is actively recruiting farmers to join the membership. They are trying to learn as much as they can from farmers by having a group discussion. Three farmers and three SCCWN members came together to have a discussion around what it means to farm and be a farmer and the results suggest that more engagement will be fruitful for both groups.

This discussion, framed by the Civic Governance Model and implementing the standards, principles, and disciplines, made it a success. A monthly meeting was held each of the 8 months during the report period with 7 to 9 participants. Agendas for these meetings and outcome documents are attached. All parties involved in these meetings left feeling like they had learned from one another, felt heard and without blame. Although the farmers in the discussion have not committed to becoming members they did commit to continuing these discussions to better understand how we can all work together to solve they complex issues within our communities. This discussion was evidence that the members of SCCWN have indeed learned the model and are getting practice in using the standards, principles, and disciplines.

The SCCWN also helped facilitate two virtual workshops focused on teaching members of the Lake Mallalieu Association the importance of water quality and what they can do in their own back yards. It was emphasized that before we ask others to change we must first show that we too are willing to make change for the common good of water quality. The recorded workshops will be housed on the LMA website for those who are new to the lake and/or could not make it to the workshops.

Cover Crop Cost Share: There have been a total of 384 acres of multi-species cover crops implemented and reimbursed, between 08/01/2020 and 03/31/2021. These cover crops amount to a reduction of 272lbs of nitrogen, 62lbs of phosphorus, and 17.6 tons/year of sediment. There is interest and planning to plant 500+ acres in 2021 that will fully use the available cost-share in the grant.

Civic Governance Policy Agenda

Identity Statement: - The St Croix County Water Network develops the civic leadership necessary to increase capacity and sustain purposeful partnerships for the common good of improving water quality in Lake St. Croix

Civic: The work of citizens. "Civic" is a qualifier that indicates that our work is framed in the tension between democratic principles and develops the capacity of the *populous* to govern for the good of the whole within that tension.

Govern: To rule over by right of authority; to exercise a directing or restraining influence over; to guide; to define problems, contribute to solutions and act as a policy maker.

Policy: Principled course of action. Policies provide a compass for governance; they are the result of taking bearing and setting direction. They provide the basis for rewards and sanctions. Policies require continual evaluation and feedback. Individuals and institutions have policies.

Agenda: Plan for action. "We believe in this principled course of action (policy) and therefore we will do x, y and z (agenda).