Dodge County Alliance for Healthy Soil Healthy Water

February 8, 2021 Minutes

Via Zoom Meeting

**Participants:** Bill Boettge, John Bohonek, Andrew Condon, Jeff Gaska, Dale Gasser, Tally Hamilton, Karen Huber, Ruth Johnson, Becky Justmann, Wayne Kok, Dale Macheel, Charlie Nelson, Tony Peirick, Matt Peplinski, Ellen Perkins, Mark Riedel, Michelle Scarpace, Michael Sorge, Bill Stangel, Linda Truelove, Marty Weiss and Tracy Zemlo.

**Guest Speaker:** Michelle introduced Dodge County Executive Director with Farm Service Agency Matt Peplinski. Matt thanked the Alliance group for the invitation to speak at the meeting. He gave a brief overview of programs that the Dodge County office administers as part of the farm bill program. Some of the programs include the Agriculture Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC). The ARC/PLC program provides income support for farmers crop commodities. Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC). DMC is a voluntary risk management program for dairy producers. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a land conservation program. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP is part of the CRP and farmers are paid an annual rental rate in exchange to remove environmentally sensitive land from production and establishing permanent resources conserving plant species. Both are voluntary programs and contracts are typically 10-15 years. The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 1 & 2). CFAP1 assists farmers that have been impacted by Covid-19. FSA updated the payment calculations for CFAP 2. Matt opened it up for some Q&A. Bill B thanked Matt for attending the meeting and for being a part of the program.

**January Annual Meeting Minutes:** No additions or corrections.

**February 10th Soil Health Expo:** Tony said that everything is coming together. They currently have around 50 plus for in person attendance and around 20 for the virtual option. They could use some help with registration the day of the event. Please let Tony know if you are available.

**Committee Reports**

Marketing/Communication/Membership

* Partnerships: Bill Boettge said that letters have been sent out to fifteen groups regarding partnerships with the Alliance group. Excellent responses so far. Hoping for about twenty partners.
* Videos: Currently working on two videos. Love Your Lake and Run Off From Ag and Lake Property Owners.
* Newsletter Update: First newsletter went out in January. Michelle thanked everyone who contributed to the newsletter. Michelle advised that she will need any articles for the next newsletter by March 15th.

Programs & Activities

* Met with Discover Farms regarding possible edge of field monitoringto collect data on the impact of water quality. Looking at how they may work with Dodge County farmers and set up monitoring systems.
* Partnership with Sand County Foundation and an EPA Grant. Currently waiting for paper work to be completed.
* The Alliance group sent out a letter in support of the Land and Water Conservation Departments application for a grant to support a new Ag Enterprise Area in the Town of Westford. The grant would be for $30,000 and will be designed to be an incentive for farmers to sign up.
* Farm Lease: They have compiled a list of possible options to add to lease addendum. Jeff will continue to work through the options and have a final addendum ready soon.

**Finance**

* They are working on the development of a finance committee. They will be meeting with the Farmers Group to develop a solicitation program for funds that they would work together on.
* The LWCC donated $750 to the Alliance group. Bill thanked John B for the donation.

**Reports form Organizations, Agencies and Groups**

* **FLILPARD**: Tracy Zemlo-They had a meeting last month regarding the Alto Creek Weir and the maintenance that needs to be done. The DNR will get Tracy contact information for the DNR Dam Engineer.
* **FLPO:** Charlie Nelson-They are working with FLILPARD on modifying the cover crop program before spring. They will share their program with Beaver Dam and Sinissippi. They have had several conversations with property owner Wayne Kok regarding a possible monitoring site along a creek on his property. Looking into installing a kayak launch. They are working with FLILPARD in setting up the pontoon rides for farmers this summer. More details to come. DNR is hosting a zoom meeting on February 10th regarding rough fish removal.
* **Sinissippi:** Ellen Perkins-Continuing to work on their strategic planning. Mike Kadinger is working on the carp management problem.
* **BDLIA:** Karen Huber-January activities were cancelled due to the passing of John Moser.
* **BDLD:**Bill Boettge-They have a lot to be done. Chairman Bill Foley is starting the 2022 budget that will be presented to the property owners this summer.
* **LWCC:** John Bohonek-Working on year end reports.
* **DNR:** Mark Reidel-Continue to work on the Targeted Performance Standard. They have a contract with UW to do a full scale cost benefit analysis. They are working on further research with Discovery Farms.
* **Town of Fox Lake:** Wayne Kok- Spoke about opportunities to do testing to get some base line documentation of the area.
* **UW Ext:** Michelle Scarpace-Deadline for applications for the Ag Educator position in Dodge County is today.

Next Alliance meeting will be Monday, March 15, 2021 at 10:00 am via zoom.

In closing Bill thanked everyone for their attendance at today meeting.