

Upper St. Croix Watershed Planning Meeting on May 15, 2006

Prioritized List of Issues

On May 15th, representatives from the Friends of the St. Croix Headwaters (FOTSCH), Gordon/St. Croix Flowage Association (GSCFA), Upper St. Croix Lake Association (USCLA), River Alliance of Wisconsin (RAW), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources DNR), and UW-Stevens Point meet at a meeting hosted by John Haack (UW-Extension St. Croix Basin) to initiate this effort.

Fourteen attendees representing the three local lake and river organizations each voted for (only) their top four priority choices. Note: Issues are rank-ordered. Those receiving low points are likely to be important but they received fewer votes.

- [9 points] Monitoring. More H₂O monitoring data across three water bodies and Eau Claire River and Ox Creek. Need a plan to consistently gather data across the watershed.
- [8 points] Phosphorus and aquatic vegetation level. Phosphorus level in St. Croix system increasing, algae blooms, and aquatic growth. ID and find out more about toxic testing (blue-green algae).
- [6 points] Road run-off and faulty culverts. Run-off from roads is a problem in some areas. Culverts may be poorly placed or misaligned. Need culvert inventory and rating scale.
- [5 points] Cranberry operations. Want to know are there any impacts of surface and ground water degradation caused by cranberry operations in Gordon.
- [5 points] Water level of St. Croix Flowage. Level is at all time low. Is dam being managed properly?
- [5 points] Old septic systems. Are old septic systems affecting water quality? Gray water not always treated.
- [4 points] Modeling. How land use and water interact. Create proactive “what if” models from that.
- [3 points] New volunteers. Getting new volunteers, involve more members, including youth.
- [2 points] Generate laws. Data we gather should be used to generate laws to protect the resource in perpetuity.
- [2 points] pH. pH more acidic now than in 1995?
- [2 points] Measuring the right thing. What do we already know and what do we still need to know?

- [2 points] Education. Education of adults. Need yearly compilation/progress report and broad distribution of this information.
- [1 point] Each association should focus on goals and then prioritize actions (FOTSCH, USCLA, SCFA).
- [1 point] Public health issue. Notification and to whom can the public direct questions?
- [1 point] Water treatment plant. Are we getting possible surface or ground water contamination from the waste treatment plant in Solon Springs?
- [0 points] Shoreline buffer. Amount of shoreline buffer should be increased around lakes.
- [0 points] Wetland filling. Incremental wetland filling – land use, water quality shifts.
- [0 points] Aquatic invasive species. Need to consistently monitor for aquatic invasive species – especially upstream.
- [0 points] Brook trout. Protection/preservation of upper watershed Brook trout population.
- [0 points] Take a long view. Be patient, committed, and take a long view.
- [0 points] Mussels. Decline in mussel diversity near Highway 53 Bridge (includes concern about catfish passage).
- [0 points] Light pollution. Night is no longer dark.
- [0 points] ORW. Headwaters segment lacks ORW protective designation.
- [0 points] Fish passage. Fish passage on dams especially sturgeon.