

# Notes: Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023

## Badger Mill Creek Stakeholder Group

Agenda, notes, and meeting materials at [www.madsewer.org/bmc-plus/](http://www.madsewer.org/bmc-plus/)

### Desired outcomes:

- Shared draft definition of a healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek
- Shared understanding of water quality factors impacting Badger Mill Creek

### Participants:

- Melissa Michaud, CARPC
- Nick Bower, CARPC
- Jeremy Balousek, Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept.
- Joleen Stinson, Dane County Parks Division
- Ben Schulte, City of Fitchburg
- Brian Christian, Friends of Badger Mill Creek Environmental Corridor
- Kathy Lake, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District
- Martye Griffin, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District
- Topf Wells, Trout Unlimited Southern Wisconsin Chapter
- Robert Bohanan, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association
- Lindsay Foy, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association
- Luke Diaz, City of Verona
- Chris Barnes, Town of Verona
- David Rowe, WDNR
- Mike Sorge, WDNR
- Alison Lebwohl, Alison S. Lebwohl Consulting (facilitator)
- Mike Rupiper, EOR (facilitator)

### Other Attendees:

- Laura Hicklin, Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept.
- Amanda Wegner, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District
- Michael Mucha, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District

Topic	<i>Decisions, information gathered, actions</i>
Welcome and check-in	<p><i>Round robin check-in and review of Operating Agreements.</i></p> <p>Michael Mucha, Chief Engineer &amp; Director of the sewer district, began the meeting with an acknowledgment of the feedback and criticism received regarding the process and decision. He noted that collaboration and early engagement could have been better and is committed to rebuilding a collaborative relationship with those involved. He also made an open invitation to stakeholder group members to connect with him individually to talk more.</p>
Factors: Healthy & Resilient Badger Mill Creek	<p><i>Presentations and moderated Q&amp;A</i></p> <p>Mike Sorge, DNR, gave an overview of the Badger Mill Creek stream health (<a href="#">link to presentation</a>).</p> <p>Kathy Lake, MMSD, gave an overview of the District’s effluent to Badger Mill Creek (<a href="#">link to presentation</a>).</p> <p>Written questions were taken. The speakers’ responses were given at the meeting and, due to time constraints, by email after the meeting. See attached Presentation Q &amp; A document for the complete list of questions and responses.</p>
Defining Health & Resilience for Badger Mill Creek	<p><i>Working from everyone’s individual definitions, each table developed the following definitions of Health &amp; Resilience:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community (natural reproduction and recruitment of trout), and ecosystem services that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.</li> <li>• A healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek will at a minimum provide the quality and quantity of water to maintain existing aquatic and riparian ecosystems including an ability to recover from disturbances due to urbanization and climate change.</li> <li>• An ecosystem that supports the ability to respond to short- and long-term changes and considers the full range of plant, animal, and microbial life across geographic scales.</li> <li>• Natural community / strongest it can be, Simple definitions: support ecological/natural community, provide ecological services, recreational benefits.</li> </ul> <p><i>Together the 4-table representative agreed upon the following definition of Health &amp; Resilience:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community, and ecosystem services (riparian, in-stream, and in the watershed) that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.</li> </ul> <p><i>The group then took a straw poll on the definition above as follows. Note that a straw poll is a non-binding “sense of the group” and allows each person in the room to weigh in.</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement: We agree to use this (above) definition to assess and compare potential projects to support the health and resilience of Badger Mill Creek.</li> <li>• Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 agree</li> <li>• 2 need more information to decide</li> <li>• 1 disagree</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Other noteworthy items	<p><i>Noted past and present work (more information should be provided at a future meeting):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeremy provided a handout that was shared with the group via email summarizing the Dane Co and City of Verona Habitat project completed on Badger Mill Creek. This will be discussed in more detail at the Dec. meeting.</li> </ul>
Action items	<p>Facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type up and share notes with the group.</li> <li>• Incorporate decisions and discussions into charter and project planning as needed.</li> </ul> <p>Stakeholder group participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review these notes and email Alison &amp; Mike with corrections.</li> <li>• <b>In order to maximize the value of our time together, all participants commit to doing advance work, including providing feedback through advance surveys.</b></li> </ul>



## Presentation Q & A

1. Q: What year is (was) the temperature data? Does it fluctuate much year to year?  
MMSD: Temperature data was from 2021 at the WWTF. Effluent temperatures fluctuate with air temperature throughout the year and follow air temperature. MMSD has seen a trend of increasing temperatures over the past few years. There is only a small amount of temperature change (measured at ~0.5-degree F°) from the WWTF and the discharge location.
2. Q: RE: Macroinvertebrate IBI, Are there notable species absent?  
DNR: Yes  
Q: Is IBI lower because of habitat, temperature, DO, all of the above?  
DNR: Yes, all of the above
3. Q: RE: Budget constraints, How does MMSD approach budget constraints for increasing costs and increasing revenue?  
MMSD: The District develops an annual budget through their budget process which is approved by their Commission. The District's primary revenue source is customer (communities) billings.
4. Q: P was higher than the limit upstream of the discharge location. What is this attributed to and how does that relate to MMSD's mandate to meet the limit?  
MMSD: There are many sources of P in the watershed. Upstream of the effluent discharge it is primarily urban stormwater runoff. Elimination of the effluent discharge return will reduce the P in Badger Mill Creek.
5. Q: What solutions have been discussed to mitigate temperature concerns?  
MMSD: Thermal control for stormwater from existing development is one opportunity.  
Jeremy: Noted that currently developments are required to provide thermal control as part of stormwater management in the Badger Mill Creek watershed.
6. Q: How do new infrastructure plans address P mitigation? What is timing?  
MMSD: Compliance in the Badfish Creek Watershed is being met through the Yahara WINs adaptive management program. So, no new P reduction infrastructure is required. Compliance in the Badger Mill Creek watershed is proposed to be met through elimination of the discharge location.
7. Considering aging infrastructure, there can be considerable long term cost effectiveness w/ investments in new technologies. (This was a statement, not a question, but feel free to respond if you have anything to add).
8. Other watershed stressors since 2000 impacting Hilsenhoff Score: impervious surfaces, neonics (continuous soybean rotation), stormwater infrastructure, and interactions of multiple stressors. (This was a statement, not a question, but feel free to respond if you have anything to add).