Recap of May 4, 2022 CCCWC Meeting

On May 4, 2022, the Coon Creek Community Watershed Council met at the Curt Brye farm for an excellent cover crop demonstration presented by Bryce Peters who farms the property. From Mr. Peters, the Council learned that in addition to improving the soil and reducing soil erosion, cover crops also increase yields. Mr. Peters stated they pay rent for the land year round so it makes economic sense for them to have crops in the ground all year. The current winter wheat crop was planted last October and grew to a height of two inches before going dormant for the winter. As of May 4, the crop had new growth of three to four inches. Mr. Peters offered tips for growing cover crops and suggested planting early. Kevin Traastad, CCCWC member, stated partial funding for cover crops is available through the CCCWC for those who farm in the Coon Creek Watershed. The cover crops demonstrated are visible from Highway 14 just west of Coon Valley, near Thrunegaarden (Skumsrud-Thrune Farm).

In our History Minute, Marc Moilien shared a 1964 reprint of “A Brief HIstory of Soil Erosion Control in Wisconsin” by Professor O. R. Zeasman and Professor I.O. Hembre. The pamphlet details early efforts at conservation practices created by area farmers. In addition to describing conservation efforts in the larger area, it details the Coon Creek Watershed project of the early 1930’s. Professor Zeasman worked with Aldo Leopold and others to design the Coon Creek Watershed project. Professor Hembre chaired the committee that created the state historical marker near Coon Valley commemorating the Coon Creek Watershed, site of the nation’s first large-scale conservation demonstration.

The CCCWC welcomed its youngest member and its first youth member, Jed Olson. Jed farms with his family in the Coon Creek Watershed. He took photographs of the cover crop demonstration for the Council.

As befits a watershed council, the CCCWC held its first election of its Board of Directors in the field amongst the cover crops. The members elected to the inaugural CCCWC Board are Debbie Andre–Treasurer, Tucker Gretebeck–Vice-President, Monique Hassman, Zachary King, Marc Moilien, Ashley Olson, Kevin Traastad, Maggie Traastad–Secretary, Nancy Wedwick–President.

The Planning and Finance Committee reported that the next organizational step is to file Articles of Incorporation with the State of Wisconsin as a nonprofit organization. The Cover Crop Committee reported those interested in cover crop funding should sign up by June. The Promotions Committee will have draft logos for the organization at the June meeting. The committee is also starting a Facebook page. The Conservation Demonstration committee is planning several events for the summer and fall. The next meeting of the CCCWC will be on June 1, 2022, at the Norskedalen Nature and Heritage Center.