

DRAFT - Council on Forestry Meeting
Sentry World, Stevens Point
July 9, 2013

Council Members Present: Troy Brown, Matt Dallman, Paul DeLong, Tom Hittle, Jim Hoppe, Jim Kerkman, Rep. Jeff Mursau, Kim Quast, Mark Rickenbach, Jane Severt (Council Vice-Chair), Henry Schienebeck (Council Chair), Sen. Tom Tiffany, Richard Wedepohl, Paul Strong, Virgil Waugh, and Bruce Allison

Council Members Absent: Randy Champeau, and Rep. Fred Clark

Guests Present: Terrisa Mulder, Bob Mather, John Duplissis, Earl Gustafson, and Andy Gill

Chair Schienebeck called the meeting to order at 9:42 am with introductions of Council members and guests.

Meeting Minutes

Managed Forest Law Presentation

Tom Hittle

The final Council report based on the outcome of May 14th meeting was generated and has since been put on the Council website. There was full Council consensus on 21 of the items. Concern was raised by Rep. Mursau regarding the fact that the Council did not come to consensus on three of the items. He felt this should be given to Legislature as an entire package. Jane Severt ensured Rep. Mursau that the Council will be supportive of what legislature puts forth as final changes to the law. Richard Wedepohl made mention that certain members of WWOA are upset the Council did not put forth a stronger stance and give more specifics in regard to rates and yield tax. He feels owners feel compelled to sell or move land to other uses.

Rep. Mursau suggested the questionable issues be sent through the committee process which would allow people to express concerns and ask questions before a final decision is made.

Motion made by Troy Brown and seconded by Jane Severt:

The Council accepts the Managed Forest Law report dated June 19, 2013, as the final summary of recommended program revisions. The Council submits the report to the Council's legislative representatives with the request that legislation be drafted based on the recommendations in the report. The Council further requests that the 21 items for which there is consensus be drafted as a package, reflecting the trade-offs contained within. The Council further recognizes that there are issues in the report for which the consensus did not include specific recommendations. The Council stands ready to work with the legislature, as requested, to refine those issues.

Action Item(s)

- MFL Sub-Committee will develop a summary statement of previous Council discussions leading up to the final decision document in addition to a general definition of what MFL is and why the program is available to the public. It should identify why we have this law and why changes are being proposed. The summary should give a thorough list of pros and cons of the proposed changes and why they are being suggested for change. The summary statement should be

complete no later than July 30, 2013, at which time it will be sent to all Council members for review before being sent to legislature.

Economic Summit

Paul DeLong

The Economic Summit is tentatively scheduled for early December; however, this has yet to be confirmed by the Governor's office. The intent is to hold the summit in Madison. It will begin late morning or early afternoon with a reception that evening. The agenda is in the works and the committee hopes to have the Governor kick-off the event. Invitees will be legislature, department heads, and decision-makers from the various sectors of the forestry community. The Council is looking for defined outcomes from the summit and hopes to come out of the summit with a list of actionable items.

Forest Practices

Henry Schienebeck & Mark Rickenbach

The Council reviewed a document prepared by the Council on Forestry Research Subcommittee. The goal of this document is to answer the question, "How does Wisconsin remain competitive in providing sustainability grown wood fiber into the future?"

Council members and others suggested several different directions the research might take or feel are important; however, a key task for the research team will be to conduct relevant reviews of past research and initial preliminary data collection and analyses that justify more in-depth study. The focus of that subsequent study may address the directions posited by the Council and/or different ones, so long as they are regarded as key to answering the umbrella research question outlined above.

The Council on Forestry, through the Research Subcommittee, will work with the Research Team in vetting the overall project design and directions for in-depth analysis. This process will be funded over the next two years, in the amount of \$600,000.00. Great Lakes Timber Professional Association (GLTPA) and Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) will oversee the program.

Potential research directions

- What is the availability of wood fiber in the state – by broad product categories, region, and ownership – now and in the future?
- How have land ownership changes, experienced over the last 15 years, affected the supply of wood fiber?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of regulations and voluntary guidelines (e.g., best management practices, silvicultural guidelines, etc.) on the supply of wood fiber?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of forest certification programs on both the supply and the demand for wood fiber?
- What is capacity and demand of wood using industries to utilize Wisconsin's wood fiber resource?
- What portion of wood supply is currently being used by existing industries and how much wood fiber would be available for industry growth?
- Question to be developed concerning, Managing fire risk in Wisconsin.

A key question that remains is the process by which the Council would select one or more entities to work on this (e.g., send request for proposals, select one provider, or select a consortium).

Action Item(s)

- *Mark Rickenbach will update the document presented and distribute electronically to Council members. Once the document is received, Council members should review and send any questions/concerns/updates to Mark no later than July 31, 2013.*
- *Jane and Henry are scheduled to meet with DNR Grants staff on July 24th. This will be discussed during that meeting. After the meeting, Jane and Henry will report back to the group electronically.*

Legislative Updates

Sen. Tiffany & Rep. Mursau

Representative Jeff Mursau explained that legislature approved National Forest Income (NFI) & Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILT) payments be made to towns where school districts contain a National Forest. One-year transition funding in the amount of \$2.5 million was also provided from the Forestry Account.

Senator Tom Tiffany discussed the Iron County Mining Project and the fact that protestors are currently squatting on County Forest land. They have been cutting trees without permits, defacing property, etc. This is in direct violation of the law. Senator Tiffany also raised concern regarding how the Department is handling the permit process for the roads currently used by the mining company. He has concern regarding what type of precedent is being set.

Legislative Tour

John Duplissis

John Duplisses proposed the Council host a legislative tour to highlight the current state of forest resources, forest products industry, and emerging technology in the state of Wisconsin. The goal of the tour is to help decision-makers understand the current state of the economic, ecologic, and social issues that forest resource managers, industry, and woodland owners are dealing with as they practice sustainable forest management.

John suggested that this be conducted in cooperation with this year's Wisconsin Tree Farm Field Day on Friday, August 16, 2013. This event is being held at Dennis and Kim Schoeneck's property in Oneida County. John is uncertain where the funding for this event would come from; however, he volunteered to assist in the logistical preparation should the Council decide to move forward with this date.

The Council agrees with the idea of a legislative tour but did not reach consensus on the August date due to the lack of preparation time. Representative Mursau suggested the event may be better attended if it were opened up to legislative staff.

It was also noted that the Council would be interested in putting together an Urban Forestry tour as well.

Action Item(s)

- *John will make phone calls and touch base with legislative offices/aids regarding the proper timing for the tour to verify whether the August date will work.*

State Forester's Report

Paul DeLong

Budget

The budget process is complete and approved. The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) approved the Governor's proposed forestry budget with only one exception involving a change to advertising and selling timber from State Lands. A JFC motion eliminated 32 FTE positions from the Department. The positions were not specified. The Department will be going through an allocation process to determine which positions should be eliminated causing the least amount of impact. There should be additional clarification regarding the positions come fall. For further clarification:

- The positions were cut but not the funding
- Effective July 1, 2014
- There was an additional 450 FTE cut from State Government with an allocation to agencies yet to be decided. The Division has received approval to be more aggressive in hiring – current vacancy rate is 12%. A class of 17 foresters was just hired and a class of up to 10 Forestry Technicians will be hired in late July.

Stewardship

Currently 13.5 million annually comes from the forestry account for Stewardship Debt Retirement. An additional \$5.5 million annually comes from the Forestry account for payment in lieu of taxes on state owned lands. There was no change to this in the budget; however, there were other changes.

- Stateside Stewardship (used by DNR) was cut back. Only 1/3 can be used for fee acquisition, the remaining 2/3 must be used for easements or county forests.
- Counties are eligible to use any remaining dollars in the NCO allotment from the previous fiscal year
- The bill requires DNR to conduct a roads assessment for access on state property. The inventory and mapping of all roads by condition class will be undertaken.
- The department will be assessing land for sale)
- A cap was placed on the amount of land the DNR can own. The cap was set at 1.9 Million Acres

Silviculture

Carmen Hardin is working with the Silviculture Guidance Team to prepare the final disposition of Silviculture guidance. This should be complete and distributed to the Council later this month. Clarification was given regarding the team selection process and the steps within that process are laid out as follows:

- Henry, Jane, and Fred reviewed all applications
- Paul made the final decisions based on Jane and Henry's recommendations

In response to concerns about the change in process made as a result of dialogue by council members, Paul, in consultation with Henry and Jane, decided to add, 2 additional representatives, one

representing pulp and paper and the other small landowners. These individuals will remain in place for the full two year term. Once the two year term is complete, the slots for these two categories will be refilled and both incumbents for each seat will be able to reapply, as will others who are not yet serving.

MFL Efficiency

Bob Mather and several members of the Forestry Leadership Team met with Dovetail in March 2013 at which time next steps were identified. In response to that discussion the Forestry Leadership Team put together a group of internal staff (primarily supervisors) to identify key items in how the department implements the MFL program in the field. The focus is on items/tasks that consume significant staff time and may benefit from improved efficiencies and consistency. The team started its work in June. A major focus is how the department examines and approves MFL cutting notices. The Council and others within the forestry community will be engaged as this moves forward. The initial product will be available shortly after September 1, 2013.

Germann Fire

Paul showed a PowerPoint presentation detailing the events of the Germann Fire. PowerPoint is attached.



Germann Fire.ppt

Deer Trustee Report

Jane Severt and Jim Kerkman

Public participation was encouraged during the first meeting held in March. In order to actively participate in subsequent meetings, one must be/have been part of the entire process. Four different action items have been identified. Dr. Kroll made a presentation at the last meeting. The meetings have been a learning experience and members feel they are learning from one another. The Teams will make recommendations based on action team focuses. The public can visit the website for information and to give input.

Upcoming Meeting(s)

September 9-10, 2013 (Tour/Aldo Leopold Center, Baraboo, WI)

November 12, 2013 (Location TBD)

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by Terrisa Mulder, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources