

Council on Forestry Meeting

Dreyfus Center, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

November 13, 2015

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

Council Members Absent: Bruce Allison

Guests Present: Jillian Potter (WDNR), Allison Hellman (WDNR), Jessie Augustyn (GLTPA), Tony “T.J” Morice (BTEC), Bob Peterson, Gerry Mich, Nancy Bozak (WVOA), Sara Bredesen (The County Today), Earl Gustafson (WI Paper Council), Jim Swanke (Towers Watson), Les Werner (UWSP), Susan Schuller (LEAF), Jon Fosgitt (Compass Land Consultants)

Chair Schienebeck called the meeting to order at 9:11 with introductions of Council members and guests present.

Meeting Minutes

Update on Dispute Resolution Process

(Jessie Augustyn)

Dispute Resolution Process (DRP)

Jessie Augustyn presented an update on the DRP. Committee met over the course of the last six weeks and developed an interim DRP for MFL and CFL. A draft DRP was delivered to the Council and the goal today is get the Council’s input and feedback. After the Council’s input, public and DNR staff input will be solicited using the DNR input process, so the DRP can be finalized by the Forestry Leadership Team December 16-17 to be included in the Forest Tax Handbook. Implementation of the DRP will begin in January 2016.

Jessie provided an overview of the DRP, including the situations it is designed to cover, responsibilities of the roles, qualifications for the roles, and the steps in the process and facilitated a discussion on the Council’s input on the DRP.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to Amend Forestry Specialist experience qualification to a minimum of seven years and Forestry Expert experience qualification to a minimum of ten years. Motion carried.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded that the Administrator will get feedback on fairness, buy-in, and timeliness from all parties involved in the DRP and the landowner, and that information will be incorporated into the annual report to the Council on Forestry. Motion carried.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded requesting clear verbiage under DRP Administrator Responsibilities that they are responsible for conducting background checks on the Forestry Specialist and Forestry Expert. Motion carried.

Action Item: Allison will change the Specialist qualification language to match the Expert qualification language.

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Climate-informed Forestry **(Severt and Dallman)**

Vice Chair Jane Severt introduced the topic of climate-informed forestry. Jim Swanke gave a presentation titled “Increasing Prevalence of Extreme Weather Events” looking at the increase in extreme weather events globally and in Wisconsin and the potentials for making Wisconsin forests more resilient. He shared two cases studies from insurance company Swiss Re that addressed improving resiliency, one in New York post-Hurricane Sandy and one in Maharashtra, India. Jim shared potential strategies for improving the extreme weather resilience of Wisconsin forests and facilitated a discussion about them.

Jim Swanke is Director, Risk Consulting of Towers Watson and Lecturer on Sustainability Risk management at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Jon Fosgitt gave a presentation titled “TNC Caroline Lake Project” focusing on the use of climate informed metrics at the Caroline Lake Demonstration Project. He outlined the metrics developed with the Nature Conservancy that leveraged forestry inventory data and integrated the climate tree atlas projections to measure climate risk and used a variety of tree type stands at Caroline Lake to demonstrate the metrics. Jon also outlined the next steps of the project and facilitated a discussion on use of the metrics and risk assessment report.

Jon Fosgitt is a forest management specialist with Compass Land Consultants.

Exploring property tax incentive programs **(Mark Rickenbach)**

The Vice Chair introduced the follow-up discussion on MFL and property tax incentive programs from the presentation at the September Council meeting. Mark Rickenbach took the lead with this topic. The goal is to determine where the Council ultimately wants to go with MFL and property tax incentive programs.

The Council reviewed the answers to the questions posed at the previous meeting and discussed the current status and value of Wisconsin’s MFL program as well as the proposed MFL legislation. As there was not a quorum, no decisions were made at this point and it was determined that this topic would be revisited at a future meeting.

Legislator’s Report **(Rep. Mursau and Sen. Tiffany)**

Representative Mursau and Senator Tiffany discussed proposed MFL legislation with the council.

Decision: Morning conference on November 30 to discuss proposed legislature

Action Item(s):

- Rebecca and Paul will schedule a morning conference call on November 30, 2015.
- Henry and Jane will draft comments and send to the Council to review before the November 30th conference call.

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State Forester's Report

(Paul DeLong)

Economic Workshop Update – All the workshops have been completed. Council members who attended shared their experiences, which were favorable. Items brought up in the discussion include:

- Differences in practices based on region
- Long-term implementation and measuring outcomes
- Incorporating workshops with new classes
- Improving collective understanding
- Next steps

Economic Considerations Chapter, Silviculture Handbook – Economic Considerations chapter in Silviculture Handbook went out for 21 day public feedback and comments are being reviewed. Comments came in from different sources due to the focus on economics. Some economic considerations are in the individual sections. There are additional also chapters from the Timber sale Handbook currently out for public comment.

Forest Action Plan- U.S. Forest Service has requested all states to submit a report of forestry success stories. This is an additional category to the existing plan. The Council was sent a request to for feedback, and the report has been submitted.

Department has announced Quinn Williams as the new Chief Legal Counsel.

Good Neighbor Authority – Timber sales are moving along, anticipating bid openings in late December or early January in both east and west at the same time. New Counties have passed resolution and are gearing up solicitation for bids. A report is due to the legislature in January.

A process for assessing moving the Division of Forestry headquarters north with be presented to the Council.

Action: Jane Severt will provide a summary about GNA and SRS payments for Sen Tiffany.

Next Meeting – An online poll will be sent out to determine the date for the next meeting.

Meeting minutes submitted by Jillian Potter, Wisconsin DNR