

Meeting Minutes
Wisconsin Council on Forestry
Hotel Chequamegon – Ashland, WI
June 21, 2012

Members Present:

Bruce Allison, Troy Brown, Matt Dallman, Paul DeLong, Jim Hoppe, Will Kiefer (for Dick Wedepohl), Henry Schienebeck, Jane Severt, Virgil Waugh, Kim Quast, Jim Kerkman, Paul Strong, Mark Sherman, Rep. Jeff Mursau, Rep. Fred Clark

Members Absent:

Randy Champeau, Mark Rickenbach, Earl Gustafson

Guests Present:

Jeremy Solin, Terrisa Mulder, John DuPlissis, Greg Rebman, Robert Mather, Tom Duke, E.G. Nadeau, Rep. Janet Bewley, Carmen Hardin, Fred Souba, Rudy Nigl, Mary Willett from congressman Shaun Duffy's Office

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Schienebeck called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. He then suggested that a letter/gift be prepared and presented to Mary Brown, thanking her for nine years of wonderful service to the Council. Former Council Chair Fred Souba volunteered to co-sign the letter with Chair Schienebeck. Schienebeck then asked those present to introduce themselves.

ACTION ITEM:

- Paul DeLong will compose the letter to Mary Brown and forward upon completion for appropriate signatures.

Field Tour Insights

Brief discussion was held between Council members regarding the previous day's tour of Caroline Lake and the *Shared Landscape Initiative*, the proposed Penokee Mining site, Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center and the Agro-Forestry Project and finally the Bayfield County Deer Exclosure Project. The Council decided to send thank-you notes to partners and presenters.

ACTION ITEM:

- Matt Dallman volunteered to handle thank-you notes to the presenters for the *Shared Landscape Initiative* and Jane Severt volunteered to handle all others.

DNR Strategic Business Plan – Paul DeLong

Paul DeLong provided the enclosed, 30-page document titled "Strategic Planning and Direction." Rep. Fred Clark appreciated the documentation provided. Mark Sherman and Jane Severt suggested a "report-card" type document containing information regarding what has been done, what has not, and why. This report should cover plans and annual reports on agency accomplishments. Severt also suggested that the Liaisons to the Council be responsible to review items before presenting them to the Council.

Each section of the document attached was discussed and reviewed allowing Council members to ask questions and make comments or suggestions.



062112

Programmatic Business

County Forests – No comments or suggestions

Fire Protection – Matt Dallman really liked the goals section of this document. Jane Severt had concerns regarding the new seven-day schedule and the fiscal impact it may have in addition to the potential increased training costs. Paul DeLong explained the previous program as well as the new system which requires multiple individuals trained and certified in fire protection. DNR will be evaluating the fiscal impacts of this change, as well as impacts on other areas of the program.

Rep. Fred Clark asked if the DNR works in partnership with private landowners that do prescribed burning. Paul DeLong stated that the DNR is heading in that direction. The Council asked to see reports on this progress.

Forest Health - Jane Severt would like clarification regarding what is referred to as “priority issues.” Paul DeLong stated that pressing issues are those that pose the greatest threats and potential loss of value. He noted that more focus is now on invasives and less so on the natives, given their impacts and the inability of our forestry to adapt quickly.

Severt had questions regarding priority #4 and wondered if increased funding would be provided to private land owners. She stressed the fact that we need private land owners to be educated and proactive when it comes to managing invasive species. This will decrease the possibility of invasives moving to public forests. The council would like clarification on what resources are available for funding. Kim Quast mentioned the reallocation of funds and Wisconsin Forest Land Owner Grant Program (WFLGP). There was also discussion on the possible use of federal EQIP funds for this purpose.

Forest Product Services – Paul DeLong confirmed the plan to hire three additional staff over time. He also expressed the importance of securing individuals with a strong background in the forest industry. Jane Severt expressed the benefit of seeing the value behind Forest Product Services creating partnerships with varying Economic Development Corporations (EDC).

Troy Brown questioned who is responsible for overseeing the EDC’s? Jane Severt stated that each program is funded at the county level and the regional planning commission handles if county has no delegated EDC or extension agents. Troy then suggested that Chris Berry, Executive Director of EDC in Langlade County meet with other counties on their current processes.

Nursery Program – The council briefly discussed the option to containerize but at this time it simply is not a cost effective option.

Private Forestry – Matt Dallman had a question regarding priority #4 and what constitutes “high risk.” Bob Mather answered that the State Stewardship Committee is responsible for determining this. Matt also questioned priority #5 and expressed the importance behind following up and staying in touch. He worries that there is a “get them in and forget them” mentality which could hurt the program.

Henry questioned if developing conservation easements is worth it and suggests that someone from budgeting and finance come in to explain how Stewardship funds are allocated. There seemed to be some questions regarding what exactly a conservation easement consists of and what exactly it means. It was also stated that DNR oversees easements as well as their requirements and restrictions mimicking MFL and it may be beneficial to have someone more familiar with this, give an update to the Council.

Matt Dallman has great concern regarding the resolution of lands within Tribal boundaries land being in violation of MFL and forced to pull-out due to lack of access. Paul DeLong was aware of the issue from some time ago but unaware of any recent problems.

State Lands – Matt Dallman questioned the relationship between the strategic direction and what is in the Operations plan. Paul DeLong explained that the Operation’s plan is the detailed allocation of resources to impact the strategic direction. Matt understood the State Lands committee prefers money slated for land control be spent elsewhere and trespass issues be addressed only on a “case-by-case” basis.

Urban Lands – There was a brief discussion between Bruce Allison and Paul DeLong regarding changes made over the years in Urban Forestry. Rep. Fred Clark questioned if the Urban Forestry Council is recognized regarding their wood utilization. Bruce confirmed that yes they are. They are taught to recycle and manage, and also mentioned the valuable use of wood chips. He stated that great efforts have and continue being made.

DECISION ITEM:

- It was decided that during a future meeting, (September, 2012) someone would come in and discuss the benefits of conservation easements with the Council. As part of this, a briefing should also be given on how Stewardship funding works.
- A motion by Jane Severt (Seconded by Jim Kerkman) decided that an annual report will be created on accomplishments and review completed by Liaison before being sent to Council.

Legislative Report

Rep. Jeff Mursau

Rep. Mursau began with an update on current legislative issues. He stated that his current “hot-topics” are concealed carry, streamlining wetlands – chapter 30 regulations, simplifying the MFL process, acquiring better taxation on forestry land, and workman’s compensation programs for the logging industry.

Rep. Fred Clark

Rep. Clark discussed the MFL, legislative Council Study Report and its progress so far. The summer of 2010 there were 18 members and since then, they have worked hard to balance the interests of all members and although the bill was introduced and passed by a Senate committee, it did not have the votes to pass through the Legislature. More work is needed to balance interests.

In addition, he has been working on interest in State lands and the current management structure of new lands and community involvement. He gave the example of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant in Southern Wisconsin.

Jane Severt

Jane discussed the upcoming Legislative Tour which is scheduled to occur during the Logging Congress event being held in New Berlin. John Duplissis suggested the Council consider a one-day TreeHaven visit in Tomahawk where Legislators could be invited. Rep. Mursau feels that this should be made a priority. Paul DeLong noted that this fall will be difficult due to the elections and encourages the Council to plan these events with the Legislative calendar in mind.

Supreme Court Update – Forest Roads and the Clean Water Act

There was lengthy discussion regarding the recent 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that federal regulators should treat storm water on industrial timberlands the same as pollution discharged for a factory, changing the longstanding practice that treats it like water coming off farm fields. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is now proposing federal rule language stipulating logging roads do not require National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits under the Clean Water Act. Paul DeLong and his Water Division counterpart, Ken Johnson, support the proposal and a letter is being sent to EPA. The letter will be shared with the Council.

There was much concern regarding the language used in the intent document. There is no clarification between logging and forestry roads. Carmen Hardin explained that to her knowledge, according to the EPA Notice of Intent, the EPA is referring to all types of forestry roads and not those specifically used for logging purposes.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Paul DeLong will forward to the Council a copy of the letter to EPA from Ken Johnson and Paul.

Council Task Force Updates

Education – Jeremy Solin/John Duplissis

Jeremy created the enclosed spreadsheet regarding various education forums at all levels. His primary focus was on K-12 as John Duplissis covered private landowner options. They would like the council to review and provide feedback and suggestions regarding the next steps for the task force. See attached spreadsheet provided to Council at meeting.



062112 Education
Spreadsheet.pdf

Mark Sherman had concerns regarding how one can measure success of said programs. John responded with the fact that they have massive tracking efforts in place but assessment times vary between programs. Henry questions how money can be best spent and which programs make the most sense without providing duplication of efforts. Rep. Clark suggested the exploration of incorporating forestry in Environmental Charter Schools. He also mentioned the value of getting forest products companies in to schools to make direct contact, train and teach.

Will Kiefer suggested that the task force look into various educational partnerships with organizations such as WWOA.

Managed Forestry Law (MFL) –Will Kiefer in place of Richard Wedepohl

The task force has had one conference call in which they focused on the tax inequity structures currently in place. The current objectives of this task force are to streamline paperwork, address SB161 which was tabled last year, develop a mission and determine what MFL should be.

Richard has talked with legislators and determined that private land owners have a negative impression of the law. In addition, Richard has great concern regarding the taxation processes in place.

Timber Supply – Troy Brown

Kim Quast and Troy Brown gave a presentation regarding the current timber supply. Mark Sherman found the total overall removals (private and public) to be valuable. Troy mentioned that 100 MMBF is currently under contract and the USFS is doing only half of what they did years ago. There was discussion regarding the role the Amish population of WI may play in wood supply. Paul DeLong questioned what other mechanisms can be used to get a better handle on what is happening with private lands not in the tax law.



Timber Supply
Committee briefing fo

Deer – Jane Severt – The deer trustee report is due by the end of June, 2012. Council gives Jane Severt and task force approval to move forward when the time comes to draft a Council response.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Education Task force is to complete an assessment process and provide recommendations. The assessment process is to identify where dollars are being spent and how funding is being distributed. In addition, they should identify gaps and duplication which will ultimately lead to recommendations.
- Jeremy is to discuss timeline for education task force assessment with Paul DeLong off-line.
- MFL Task force to develop a mission.
- DNR will work with Troy and Kim to assess how to further refine the timber simply information.

Biomass Harvest Guidelines Review Process – Matt Dallman

Update on Review Process

Carmen Hardin stated that, as decided at the last Council meeting, changes to the Biomass Harvest Guidelines (BHG) are not being made at this time, but soils information is being updated as new information becomes available. Numerous handouts were presented to Council members. Please see them attached.



062112 BHG
Guidelines.pdf



062112 BHG Soil Map
Units.pdf



062112 BHG Soil
Maps.pdf

ACTION ITEMS:

- Carmen will prepare soils maps for all Wisconsin counties and send out to Council members.
- Paul DeLong is to meet with Matt Dallman and Jim Hoppe in July 2012 to determine processes and a draft scope document for Council members to review by September's meeting. The final deadline for all revisions is Fall 2013.

State Forester's Report – Paul DeLong

Annosum Guideline Review

The proposed guidelines to prevent the spread of Annosum were sent out to the Council and other stakeholders for review in May 2012. Winter guidelines are pending on information from Glen Stanosz at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. There are two remaining listening sessions scheduled to obtain feedback from the community. These events will be held June 26, 2012, in Wisconsin Dells and June 28, 2012, in Eau Claire.

Paul provided three documents to the council which consisted of a timeline to the guide development regarding Annosum. A copy of this document as well as the department's proposal regarding treatment is enclosed.

Kim Quast has concerns regarding the public perception behind Annosum. She is questioning the overall "theories" behind Annosum as well as if Annosum is "opportunistic" and "everywhere." She suggests that it might be wise to treat for it across the state. Paul DeLong stated that unfortunately at this time there are many unknowns.

Mentioned concerns regarding the proposal were as follows:

- Fred Souba felt the 25 mile radius may be too aggressive and had concerns regarding winter application and viability of Annosum that may come in contact with cut stumps.
- The council in general has concerns regarding the tough guidelines and requirement (testing) that all applicators be fully pesticide certified. Paul DeLong stated that this is very easy to apply and he is working with DATCP regarding the exam and the potential to offer an open-book exam.



Proposed annosum
treatment guide



Proposed Guide for
May Fungicide Treatment_guide



Timeline for annosum
development (2

Forest Certification Review

Paul DeLong provided an issue brief for the Council outlining a proposed review of forest certification in Wisconsin. The Council expressed support for proceeding. Paul DeLong will follow-up to identify Council members to serve in an oversight role for the review.

- The goal is to show the benefits and costs of certification. In addition, by year end or early 2012, Paul would like to review the pros and cons of certification and complete an assessment moving forward.
- It was also announced that Mark Heyde has taken on the Forest Certification role which had been flagged as a priority.

MFL Administrative Streamlining

Paul DeLong provided the Council with the enclosed MFL update below. Dovetail Associates has been contracted with to conduct the study. Dovetail was selected due to their strength in both Forestry and business improvement process.



062112 MFL
Update.pdf

The following timeline was given regarding the Dovetail project:

May 2012 – Finalize Dovetail Contract

June – August – Dovetail Assessment

Sept – November – Dovetail Analysis causes and develops solutions

Nov – June 2012 – Implementation and Continued Collaboration

DNR Alignment – July 1st Structure Change

DNR structure changes will be in effect as of July 1, 2012. This marks the beginning of fiscal year 2013. Per Paul DeLong, responsibilities will change but the transition should be seamless from a customer standpoint. There will be a law enforcement consolidation but this process will take several years to complete. The Division is currently prioritizing vacancies and has received approval to begin filling some of its 75 vacancies.



MGMT Structure
mapping.pdf

DECISION ITEMS:

- Forest certification review update will be discussed further at September meeting.
- Forestry vacancies will be discussed further at September or December meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Written comments regarding the proposed forest certification review process are due July 20, 2012 and should be sent to Terrisa Mulder at Terrisa.mulder@wisconsin.gov
- The Council will discuss this issue further at the next meeting, September 27, 2012.

Next Meeting Date and Agenda – Henry Schienebeck

The Council will meet September 27, 2012, in Stevens Point. Paul Strong suggested that Christine Thomas, the Dean of Steven’s Point College of Natural Resources be invited to join this meeting.

ACTION ITEM:

- Paul Strong will get in touch with Dean Thomas at UW Stevens Point to extend the invitation.

Agenda items will include:

- Budgeting presentation
- Conservation Easements
 - Fiscal Aspects
 - How they work (terms, etc.)
 - Second Generation Easements
 - Public Funding
- Annosum update
- MFL update
- Education update
- Certification review update

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Submitted by:

Terrisa Mulder, WDNR