

State Forester's Report March 19, 2013 COF Meeting

Status Report for the Certification Review Project

From the January 31 COF meeting minutes -

Decision items:

- Section 10: Should the review team spend resources to investigate and summarize other organization's reviews?
 - Council decision – yes. The Council wishes to benefit from what has been learned elsewhere.
Status – Heyde has contacted Minnesota DNR, Indiana DNR, and Menominee Tribal Enterprises. A summary of these organizations review decisions is being drafted for the final report.
- Section 11: Should the review team spend resources to investigate and summarize the requirements for establishing a credible regional certification scheme?
 - Council decision – only to a limited degree. Other efforts to do this have not been successful. With limited resources should obtain feedback from MTE and Indiana regarding their past efforts.
Status –the requirements/process to establish an internationally recognized forest certification under PEFC will be summarized for the final report. The Indiana DNR and MTE efforts will be summarized under Section 10.
- Section 12 – Should the team spend the resources to gather specific information about the importance of forest certification to Wisconsin companies?
 - Yes, this is an important component of this review. In assessing the options, it was reinforced that the evaluation should be conducted by a third party. The team was asked to assess how best to get this work done.
Status – two alternatives were considered. The first would have involved the COF Certification Review steering committee as the principal investigator with support from DNR Science Services Staff and UW-Madison faculty to develop a follow-up survey to be administered through the UW Survey Center. The steering committee would be responsible for drawing conclusions from the data. Concerns were raised about the DNR being too close to the process thereby calling into question whether there may be a perception of undue influence over conclusions

drawn. For this reason Alternative 1 was not pursued.

The second alternative further removes DNR from the process, but roughly doubles the time needed and the cost involved. Under this alternative Dr. Mark Rickenbach has agreed to be the principal investigator. He would define a survey with the input of the COF steering committee and others. The survey would be administered by the UW-Survey Center. Dr. Rickenbach would hire a student to summarize data gathered. The timeline for the project would be July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014; Dr. Rickenbach would provide a report to the Council in December 2013 to meet the purposes of the Council's certification review. Dr. Rickenbach is currently drafting a more detailed proposal for consideration by the certification steering committee and potential funders.

Questions were raised about cost. Paul pointed out that funds will have to be reallocated in order to do this work.

Action Item(s):

- The Council recommended that the steering committee communicate a proposal back to the Council for consideration on the gaps in the scope of the document and their recommendation for the next phase in this process.