Minnesota Forest Resources Council
DRAFT Minutes
U of MN North Central Research and Outreach Center, Grand Rapids, MN
September 21, 2016

Members Present: Kathleen Preece (Chair), Wayne Brandt, Alan Ek, Janet Erdman, John Fryc, Bob Lintelmann, Tom McCabe, Gene Merriam, Bob Owens, Dave Parent, Shawn Perich, Susan Solterman Audette, Deb Theisen

Alternate Members Present: Amber Ellering (alternate for Forrest Boe)

Members Absent: Greg Bernu, Forrest Boe, Darla Lenz

Staff Present: Calder Hibbard, Lindberg Ekola, Rachael Nicoll, Rob Slesak

Guests: Jennifer Corcoran (MN DNR), Todd Holman (The Nature Conservancy), Mariann Johnson (facilitator), Jake Kitzmann (Camp Ripley Training Center), Duane Lula (MFRC Northeast Landscape Committee Coordinator), Jim Manolis (The Nature Conservancy), Dennis McDougall (USDA Forest Service)

Chair's Remarks
Kathleen Preece opened the meeting with a round of introductions and an informal 'State of the MFRC' address. She commended Council members for their individual contributions and collaborative efforts. She also highlighted several of the successes over the past twenty years, including the development of the site-level forest management guidelines, assessments of the six forested landscape, the completion of several reports on the competiveness of the primary forest products industry, development of the first state-level guidelines for the sustainable removal of woody biomass in the country, involvement with the development of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council's forest habitat vision, and recently securing Clean Water Fund support.

Kathleen spoke briefly about the results of the recent MFRC stakeholder survey. Overall, the MFRC received an average of three to four stars out of five. Recommendations included: communicate, promote, be active, be engaged, and be an activist. Forest issues will come and go, but the important constant is the council's effectiveness as an organization to deal with the issues. The path forward to fulfilling the MFRC's mission is to ensure internal effectiveness and external relevancy. This is also true of contributions from individual council members. Kathleen encouraged self-reflection and participation. She also asked for courteous and civil discourse and respectful conduct.

In response to a question, Gene Merriam replied that Governors Arne Carlson, Jesse Ventura, Tim Pawlenty, and Mark Dayton have been in office since the inception of the MFRC

Written Communication to the MFRC
None.

Approval of Meeting Minutes*
Bob Owens approved, and John Fryc seconded, the meeting minutes. *The minutes were unanimously approved.*

Approval of Agenda*
Gene Merriam approved, and Wayne Brandt seconded, the draft meeting agenda. *The agenda was unanimously approved.*

Executive Director Remarks
Calder Hibbard stated that he would make additional comments at the beginning of the strategic planning process. He deferred his time to Rachael Nicoll to make remarks about meeting logistics. Rachael spoke about the UPM Blandin Paper Mill Tour and dinner at Dave Parent's home. She provided additional details about the half-day field tour on Thursday, September 22 at the SPRUCE Project and other watershed research sites at the Marcell Experimental Forest.

Committee Reports
Personnel and Finance
Kathleen Preece reported that the Personnel and Finance Committee met on August 31. Committee members discussed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 and 2017 MFRC budget and requested more information that is better defined and spelled out. The committee plans to reconvene soon to approve the FY 2017 budget.

Site-Level
Dave Parent reported that the Site-Level Committee did not meet. Rob Slesak spoke about monitoring program and noted that we are currently in the second round of the new watershed-based monitoring approach. A large portion of the monitoring is occurring in the Southeast portion of the state. He noted that Dick Rossman is working to summarize the results from upwards of 40 state land sites to feed into the DNR's certification process.

Landscape Planning/Coordination
Lindberg Ekola reported that the Landscape Committee met on August 31 following the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting. The committee discussed the strategic planning process and incorporation of regional landscape committee input. Lindberg noted that the North Central Landscape planning process is approximately halfway finished. The planning committee will meet on October 26. Finally, Lindberg mentioned that there is interest from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council in updating the 25-year forest habitat vision document.

Information Management Committee
Kathleen Preece reported that the Information Management Committee did not meet.

Committee of the Whole: Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Project
Lindberg Ekola introduced Todd Holman, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Mississippi Headwaters Program Director, and Jake Kitzmann, Camp Ripley Training Center Natural Resource Manager.

Todd explained that an Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program at Camp Ripley, a three-mile conservation buffer zone, has recently evolved into a larger federal project, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. He thanked the MFRC for its work and advocacy that made this transition possible. Camp Ripley is in an area in the North Central Landscape where forest management is essential to protect water quality and quantity and wildlife habitat.

Jake explained that the ACUB Program was employed in 2004 at Camp Ripley to reduce residential encroachment from Brainerd/Baxter and Little Falls and to protect residents from smoke, noise, and dust from Camp Ripley training activities. The project has been very successful and has greatly expanded with the help of partners such as BWSR, Morris SWCD, and the DNR. Approximately 22,000 acres have been protected through conservation easements and fee-title acquisitions. In response to a question, Todd explained that the program contentious at first, but word of mouth advocacy by private landowners has been vital to bolster participation.

Jake remarked that Lindberg and other partners were instrumental in getting the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan put on the ground in about an approximately 700,000 acre area. Lindberg, working with the North Central Landscape Committee, recognized a potential working partnership with Camp Ripley and the value of a landscape stewardship plan. He also brought in additional funding, staff resources, and partnerships that were previously unavailable. The buffer zone has increased from three to 10 miles with the plan in place, and the plan informs strategic use of funds.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was created between the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of the Interior to leverage additional federal money. Collaboration and designation of military facilities as federal sentinel landscapes will result in the prioritization of federal dollars in these areas. Todd noted that the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan exactly matches the sentinel landscape area. The plan is extremely valuable because the groundwork was already done, and a great framework is in place. Todd also spoke about potential sources of future funding as well as a new TNC campaign, the Minnesota Headwaters Fund, which will prioritize funding for clean water protection.

Bob Owens asked about work taking place on the ground. Jake explained that he is a relatively new employee, but a lot of work has been done. Todd added that there are currently 200 people on the waiting list, and all local counties have resolutions of support in place. Gene Merriam expressed his strong support for this work.

MFRC Strategic Planning Session

Overview of the Planning Session and MFRC Planning Process

Mariann Johnson called the beginning of the strategic planning process. Calder Hibbard provided background information on the process and recent activities. Mariann thanked staff for compiling data received from online surveys of external stakeholders and MFRC members and from the regional landscape committees. These efforts were completed in response to

strategic planning priorities identified at the July 2016 MFRC meeting, including engaging partners and communication with external stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting today is to digest the data, give meaning to the assessment, and determine steps to move forward with the development of a strategic plan. The goal is to have a close to final version of the plan in November.

Presentation and Discussion of the MFRC Assessment Findings
Rachael Nicoll presented the results from a recent survey of MFRC stakeholders. MFRC staff released an online survey in August 2016 to understand external perspectives of the MFRC. Staff compared these findings with MFRC member and staff input to inform the strategic planning process.

The recipients of the anonymous, online survey were identified by Council members and staff. The online survey was sent to 155 people, and 57 people responded (37 percent response rate). The survey asked eight questions:

1) Select an option from the dropdown list which best describes your organization.
2) MN Forest Resources Council (MFRC) mission statement: "The MFRC is a forum where forest stakeholders discuss and resolve issues regarding Minnesota's forests. We have helped depolarize forestry issues in MN by facilitating collaboration and fostering the use of scientific information. ”Considering this statement, how effective do you feel the MFRC is at fulfilling its mission? (1 star: Not effective - 5 stars: Very effective).
3) Indicate whether the following qualities are strengths of the MFRC.
4) Indicate the IMPORTANCE of each of the following MFRC services to you and your constituents.
5) Rate your SATISFACTION with each of the following MFRC services.
6) Select the TOP THREE most important issues that the MFRC should focus on in the next three to five years.
7) What would you like to see the MN Forest Resources Council do in order to become a better or more effective organization in the next three to five years?
8) Do you have any other comments?

Rachael noted that both the stakeholders and MFRC members were asked to select the most important issues for the MFRC to address in the near future and strengths and weaknesses of the council.

Rachael’s presentation and handouts which detail the survey results can be found on the MFRC website: http://mn.gov/frc/meetings-presentations.html.

Wayne Brandt said the results were interesting given who the survey was sent to how frequently non-MFRC members attend meetings. He wondered how they formed an opinion on how Council members interact. Duane Lula remarked that he was one of the survey respondents. He commented on how some of the survey findings relate to the MFRC generally while others relate only to specific MFRC programs. Respondents are involved with the MFRC at

many different levels. It was difficult taking the survey to determine whether to evaluate the council as a whole or a specific aspect of the organization. Mariann suggested looking at the handout which detailed the comments.

Mariann asked members for their initial responses to the data. Alan Ek said the results reflect the increased segmentation of society. Bob Owens commented on the fact that no secondary forest products responded to the survey. It reflects our lack of connection with this group. Gene Merriam recommended caution in using the survey results to inform decision-making, although the information is good. We don't want to jump to the conclusion that something is unimportant just because it wasn't indicated as a top priority. Mariann noted that the question was phrased to ask about the next three to five years. Bob asked how we measure effectiveness and remain accountable to the data. Mariann responded that the afternoon session would address this question.

Next, Lindberg Ekola shared recommendations from the regional landscape committees on priority forest policy issues. He explained that committee members provided input through discussions and worksheets over two to three committee meetings, and two of the committees formed a work group to submit their input.

All six committees identified several priority policy issues under the topics of forest health and parcelization/fragmentation. They also shared several perspectives related to forest health, the forest products industry, and water resources. Lindberg identified shared perspectives within geographical areas (i.e., northern landscape committees (North, Northeast, and North Central) and southern landscape committees (East Central, West Central, and Southeast). The regional committees also indicated that they are looking for increased support, commitment, and connection with the council.

Lindberg's presentation and handouts which detail the regional committee input can be found on the MFRC website: http://mn.gov/frc/meetings-presentations.html.

Dave Parent asked about monitoring of landscape planning. Lindberg responded that there is no budget for this type of monitoring. Bob Owens noted that partnerships are essential, but they don't necessarily garner a lot of attention. We need to support and build strong partnerships.

Mariann asked members for their initial responses to this second set of data. Susan Solterman Audette asked why productivity is added to the label because the supporting points do not relate to productivity. Lindberg replied that the committees spoke to trying to find a balance between forest ecosystem health, productivity, and the forest products industry, and this is reflected in the full set of letters.

Wrap-up of Morning Session and Discussion of MFRC's 2020/Five-year Vision Concepts
Mariann asked Council members to review MFRC's 2020 vision concepts identified at the July planning session. Two of the six vision concepts were combined, resulting in four key vision areas:

MFRC's 2020/Five-year Planning Priorities/Vision Areas

1) Impactful results MFRC's core policy priorities/Issues (Including optimal private forest management).
2) Robust external communication and increased engagement with MFRC's stakeholders
3) Improved research and utilization of data.
4) Enhanced organization capacity and performance (Internal operations).

Council members and staff then met in small groups to identify goals and strategies for each of the four vision areas. Each small group was asked to formulate their goals and strategies based on the following criteria:

Criteria for Selection of Goals and Strategies

1) Addresses needs identified in the assessment data
2) Address/meet requirements of State Statute 89.A (See handout)
3) Reflects issues discussed to date by MFRC as relevant to each of the priority topic(s) (see July Notes)
4) Agreed upon by your workgroup members. Clear consensus. As needed, include outliner ideas at end of flipchart, those not agreed upon

The notes from the working groups are detailed in the attached document, 'September 21st, 2016 MFRC Council Meeting: Strategic Planning Notes'.

Identification of the Next Steps for the Planning Process.
Following a presentation of each small group's work, Mariann explained next steps for the planning process:

1) She will share a strategic planning template with staff.
2) Based on the work generated at the planning meetings, staff will begin drafting a five-year MFRC strategic plan.
3) The draft five-year plan will be reviewed at the November 16 MFRC meeting.
4) Based on input received at the November 16th meeting, the draft plan will undergo a final revision. Estimated completion date: December 2016.

Planning Session Closure
Mariann asked for final words describing the strategic planning session. People used words and phrases such as: good progress, energizing, getting close, exciting, better understanding of the functions of the organization, focus on the span of influence, and introspection.

Public Communications to the MFRC
None.

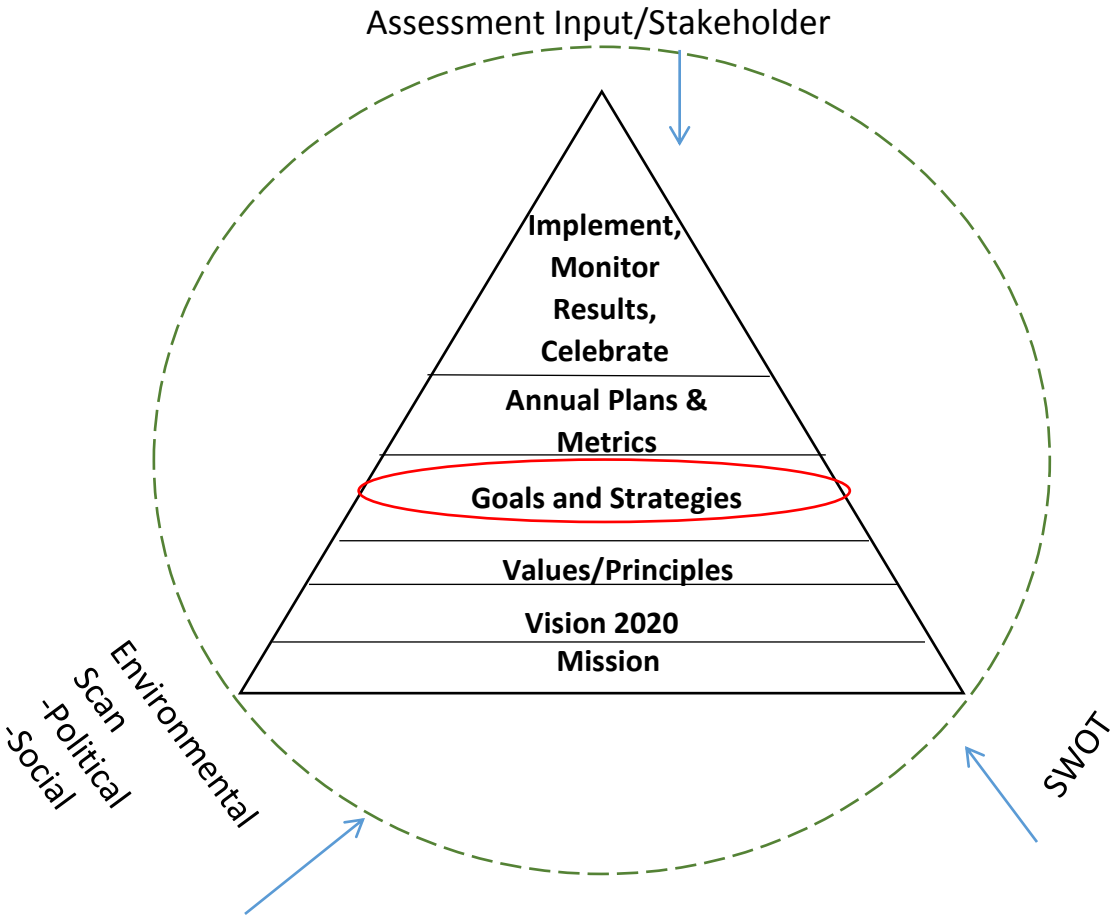
MFRC Member Comments

Amber Ellering commented on the DNR's cost-share program. The program was discussed in the policy issues working group. More information can be found on the DNR's website: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/woodlands/cost-share.html. Shawn Perich recommended sharing this information in the MFRC newsletter.

Dave Parent moved, and Deb Theisen seconded adjourning the meeting. *The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.*

September 21st, 2016 MFRC Council Meeting: Strategic Planning Notes

Strategic Planning Model



Meeting Guidelines

- Strive for balanced and full participation
- Establish shared understandings (through dialogue, clarifications)
- Promote an effective and efficient meeting
- Work together to establish a collaborative tone and process

MFRC 2020 PLANNING PRIORITIES/VISION AREAS

1) Impactful results MFRC's core *policy* priorities/Issues (Including optimal private forest management)
2) Robust external communication and increased engagement with MFRC's stakeholders
3) Improved research and utilization of data
4) Enhanced organization capacity and performance (Internal operations)

MFRC Priority Long-Range *Policy* Priorities (#1 – Above)

The following are policy area priorities as identified in the assessment surveys and by the Regional Landscape Committees.

Council Members and Staff	Stakeholders
1) Water Quality & Forests @	1) Private Forest Management
2) Health of Forest Products Industry @	2) Water Quality and Forests* @
3) Forest Fragmentation*	3) Health of Forest Products @Industry*
4) Terrestrial Invasive Species*	4) Climate Change and Carbon Sequestration
5) Private Forest Management*	5) Terrestrial Invasive Species

* = Policy issues received same percentage of votes in the survey

@ = Top priority issues as identified by the Regional Landscape Committees

Planning Workgroups

The facilitator broke council members and staff into working groups to create goals and strategies for each of the vision areas.

Criteria for Selection of Goals and Strategies

I. Addresses needs identified in the assessment data
II. Address/meet requirements of State Statute 89.A (See handout)
III. Reflects issues discussed to date by MFRC as relevant to each of the priority topic(s) (see July Notes)
IV. Agreed upon by your workgroup members. Clear consensus. As needed, include outliner ideas at end of flipchart, those not agreed upon

MFRC *DRAFT* 2020 VISION AREAS & GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. Priority Policies

Vision Area	Key Issues, Goals & Strategies
A. Policy Development Process	**Issues/OPPS**: Previous St. Pl. processes. How do we choose what to work on? Where to invest money, time, and energy? **Goal**: Develop more formalized policy development process -Transparent & Integrated **Strategies:** 1. Formalize periodic reporting on SFRA requests a.) No net loss b.) Composition/Age class c.) Climate change metrics d.) Ecology 2. Establish full council decision making and criteria
B. Water Quality/Forests	**Issues/OPPS:** $- clean water co. Gene member are CWL $ being strategically invested? **Goal:** Promote the role of forest restoration in water quality and quantity **Strategies:** 1. Leg. Oversight- continue to advise leg CW council. State agencies 2. Research- Conduct innovative approaches what are either states, prov. Doing with forest management water quality and water quality 3. Support partnerships 4. Policy/funding development- support forest restoration projects in key areas 5. Staff coordination- DNR hydro's 6. Data Gaps- ID where? What?
C. PFM	**Issues/OPPS:** **Goal:** Improve the quality and quantity of forest management of private lands **Strategies:** 1. Cost share programs 2. SFIA changes 3. Harvest income tax- incentives. Exempt % of income 4. Invasive species- very difficult. Ex trapping gophers- It can be done
D. Terrestrial Invasive Species	**Issues/OPPS:** Insects –key, plants not so much **Goal:** Keep Forests Healthy **Strategies:** 1.) Research/knowledge dissemination 2.) Integrated management—L-T effort realistic expects 3.) Climate change- Implement Practically, try not to manipulate our forests too much 4.) Stay informed a.) No net loss
E. Forest Products Industry	**Issues/OPPS:** -Wood available—existing -Wood price – new **Goal:** Promote healthy forest products industry **Strategies:** 1. Forest Competition Studies continue

	2. Bench marking 3. Fund IIC- Encourage Partners to also support 4. Trend Lines a) Electric rates b) Trans. Costs c) Wood supply d) Regulations

2. External Communication and Increased Stakeholder Engagement

1) Identify who will do the work
2) Identify audiences we want to reach
3) Develop a multi-platform strategy for communication
4) Develop new resources and ID existing resources (e.g. My Minnesota Woods) to implement the plan
5) Make the MFRC the go-to portal for MN forest information
6) Increase awareness of MFRC make accessible

Examples:

1.) Short summaries of research and policy papers on FB- link to website
2.) Glean forest-related news stories, etc. Post in email newsletter on regular basis
3.) Have Rachael produce short videos
4.) Clearing house-news releases, PSAs, radio, T.V.

3. Improved Research and Utilization Data

Prioritize — **Goal 1**: R.A.C. → Revamp more active, more effective (research priorities ID'd, more frequent)

Achieve — **Goal 2**: Framework for improved communication, prioritization, collaboration, and funding of research (leverage)

Implement — **Goal 3**: Utilization of research, effective application of research findings

Strategies: #1	Strategies: #2	Strategies #3:
1) Allocate resources to RAC 2) Vet research, past/existing 3) 10 priorities 4) Engages chair 5) Appropriate committee members a) researchers b) Available/local/active	1) Create partnership with funding sources 2) Seek annual contributions 3) Utilize existing committee structures 4) Create incentives to engage with collaborators and end users	1. Present research findings to MFRC, other orgs. 2. Private L.O. involvement 3. IIC involvement 4. UMN involvement 5. DNR involvement 6. USFS involvement 7. Feedback loop, research design

4.) Organization Capacity-Enhancement

1. **Goal:** improved effectiveness/efficiency of IMC, Info. Management co-op and research advisory committees.
    a. Strategy(ies): consider combination of 3 committees into one entity
2. **Goal:** enhanced outreach/communications of the council on its 'doings'
    a. Strategy(ies): restructure staff configurations to meet this goal (e.g. combine policy analyst/communications positions create administrative assistant position to support all programs
3. **Goal:** Improve efficiency and effectiveness of landscape, site level
    a. Strategy(ies): reconfigure member composition, chair designation and role