Minnesota Forest Resources Council
DRAFT Minutes
Cloquet Forestry Center, Cloquet
July 25, 2012

Members Present: Bob Stine (Chair), Forrest Boe, Wayne Brandt, Alan Ek, Dale Erickson, Shaun Hamilton, Bob Krepps (alternate for Greg Bernu who arrived mid-day), Gene Merriam, Darla Lenz, Bob Lintelmann, Bob Owens, Dave Parent, Shawn Perich, Kathleen Preece, Mary Richards, Susan Solterman Audette, Mike Trutwin

Staff Present: Dave Zumeta, Lindberg Ekola, Calder Hibbard, Leslie McInenly, Rob Slesak, Rob Gabrielson (student worker)

Staff Absent: Clarence Turner

Guests: Brenda Halter, Bob Sonnenberg, Steve Betzler

Chair's Remarks
Bob Stine opened the meeting with a round of introductions.

Public Input/Communication to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council
Dave distributed a letter, dated May 22, 2012, from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Tom Landwehr. In the letter, Commissioner Landwehr requested input from the Council on opportunities for the DNR and the State to support the forest industry.

Approval of May 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes*
Mary Richards moved, and Dave Parent seconded, the May 16, 2012, meeting minutes. *The minutes were unanimously approved.*

Approval of July 25, 2012 Meeting Agenda*
Mike Trutwin moved to approve the July 25, 2012, meeting agenda. Shaun Hamilton seconded the motion. *The agenda was unanimously approved.*

Executive Director Remarks
Dave yielded time to Calder Hibbard for a report on the MFRC Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Calder reported that the RAC met about a week after the May Council meeting. The committee discussed opportunities to keep the Forest Resources Research Assessment pertinent. Calder also distributed the annual Public Concerns Registration Program (PCRP) report. Only one formal complaint went through the entire PCRP process. Other calls into the program were received and discussed but were not applicable to the program.

Committee Reports
Personnel and Finance
Bob Stine reported the Personnel and Finance Committee met on June 15th. The committee received an update on the FY12 budget and approved the FY13 budget. Committee members also discussed the Commissioner's written request.

Site-Level
Dave Parent reported that the majority of Site-level Committee report will be covered later in the meeting.

Landscape Planning/Coordination
Shaun Hamilton reported that the Landscape Committee met July 11th. Lindberg Ekola distributed a draft of the meeting minutes. The Landscape Program and DNR Division of Forestry received grant #5 from the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry competitive grant program. The $396,000, three-year grant will support development of stewardship projects that support landscape plans. This particular project will support implementation of the forest action plan.

Forest Resources Information Management
Kathleen Preece reported that the Information Management Committee (IMC) has been immersed in development of a recommendation to the Council regarding invasive species policy. Calder added that the IMC has also been contributing to the private lands study (MS 272, Sec. 92) as well as developing an assessment of recommendations and progress related to the Governor's task force reports (2003, 2006, and 2007) on the competitiveness of the forest products industry in Minnesota.

Written Communications to the MFRC
DNR Commissioner Landwehr's May 22, 2012, letter was distributed during public communication.

Committee of the Whole: Proposed resolution including budget and statutory change recommendations in response to request from DNR Commissioner Landwehr about maintaining and growing the forest products industry
Bob Stine reviewed the Commissioner's letter, noting a request for recommendations related to 1) DNR administration/policy, 2) additional interagency coordination, and 3) statutory and/or budgetary changes. The P&F Committee suggested the Council address the latter recommendations at this meeting to provide time for inclusion in state budget discussions. Later today, the Council will discuss some of the longer-term items. The proposed resolution was developed based on discussion at the May MFRC meeting, review and input from Council members, P&F Committee review, and follow-up discussions between Dave Zumeta and Council members.

Bob noted that the Council was asked to provide recommendations that would not require "large" additional sources of funding, in light of the current state budget situation. He asked Forrest Boe to comment on funding concerns. Forrest replied that the competition for General Fund dollars is considerable and that Council consideration of bonding dollars and other funding opportunities would be good. While "large" is relative, particularly given the entire state budget, any amount is significant when it comes to the Department's General Fund dollars.

Gene Merriam asked whether there were any budget parameters identified by Minnesota Management and Budget that may be helpful for the MFRC to consider in developing these recommendations. Forrest replied that he was not aware of such directives, although the Dayton administration seems to be looking for new initiatives to create revenue. He suggested that any General Fund requests associated with the Commissioner's request should be strongly connected to the industry.

Dave Parent asked about the time frame under consideration. Wayne Brandt responded that the current resolution is focused on the next biennium. Dave Zumeta added that long-term recommendations will be considered in a resolution to be proposed for action at the September MFRC meeting.

Bob Owens suggested that the Council should be focused on the best recommendations possible, as opposed to constraining suggestions according to budgetary parameters. Wayne agreed, noting that the Council should forward recommendations and let the agency and administration determine budget priorities.

Dave Zumeta referenced Calder's and the Information Management Committee's assessment of progress made toward implementing recommendations from the Governor's forest industry task force reports in 2003, 2006, and 2007, noting the significant foundation of work available related to this issue. Wayne commented that many of the task force recommendations were implemented and resulted in improvements for the industry. Forrest added that there are some important recommendations that still require attention (e.g., inventory). Bob Stine asked Council members to discuss recommendations one by one.

<u>Budgetary Recommendations</u>
Obtain $275,000 per year for forest management guideline monitoring (paraphrased):
Forrest commented that this recommendation is being considered within the DNR. The $275,000 would support the status quo; beyond that, the DNR is also considering a holistic review of all the monitoring conducted by the agency. Rob Slesak added that while the recommendation reflects historic funding for monitoring, the approach would be significantly transformed to focus on watershed-level monitoring and outreach. Dave Parent expressed concern regarding the potential to transform a "silver plate" program to one of lower quality.

Request $2.0 million in bonding for forest roads and bridges:
Forrest stated that this request would support the amount required every biennium for construction and reconstruction; it does not include maintenance. Dale Erickson noted that this is a critical issue out in the forest. Mike Trutwin asked whether $2 million would be enough. Forrest responded that this request is not about small projects; it focuses on large, engineered projects that will last for 20 years. The amount reflects the amount needed for forestry-related projects.

Susan Solterman Audette inquired about how the request would play into bonding dollars that DNR already receives for road construction. She also noted concern that this includes support of recreational activities when the focus is meant to be on timber-related activities. Forrest replied that the road system is open to everyone and that is why other activities were mentioned. Wayne added that studies on road use indicate that 90% of traffic is recreational. Of bonding dollars the Division has received, funding has almost universally been spent on replacing bridges, culverts, etc. The focus has been on sites with potential water quality impacts. The vast majority of projects have supported reconstruction work. Forrest provided an overview of the various types of roads in the system, clarifying that none of the roads in the recommendation would be considered recreational user type roads. Susan asked whether any of the reconditioning on system roads is a result of ATVs. Forrest replied that he has no specific knowledge related to the question although the projects supported are those that address big problems unlikely to be caused by ATVs. Dave Zumeta noted

that DNR Forestry has roughly 2,000 miles of roads. Failure of a significant culvert can result in huge erosion and water quality problems. User safety is also a very important item.

Mary Richards asked where funding may be available to meet Dale's concerns. Wayne referenced a later recommendation (5th bullet) regarding investment in the road and silviculture programs for long-term economic benefit. Council members noted how $2.0 million doesn't go very far when it comes to maintaining infrastructure.

Bob Owens asked whether a priority list has been developed by each county for road projects related to the industry. He stated that $2.0 million seems low if projects are judged on the basis of multi-purpose use. Forrest responded that, in most cases, the counties get their own appropriation of bonding dollars; however, the state and counties work together to pool resources. The state has an inventory of all forest roads and tries to maintain those roads through some sort of rotation.

Request $2.5 million for reforestation:
Forrest stated that the Division received $2.5 million for reforestation last year but received no reforestation funding in the previous year. He was concerned that the request relies on bonding dollars and noted that the state should have a system that ensures our forests are restocked. Wayne described the shift away from General Fund appropriations. Historically, the Department of Finance took the position that trees are not a capital asset of the state and prohibited use of bonding dollars for reforestation. About a decade ago, the forestry community prevailed in getting supplemental bonding dollars with recognition that trees are a capital asset. In the era of General Fund deficits, the Department must rely on the bonding dollars alone. Discussion regarding reliance on bonding dollars for reforestation ensured.

Darla Lenz asked whether the recommendation could be improved by requesting a combination of funding sources. Bob Stine suggested that one approach would be to include an additional long-term recommendation focused on bringing back General Fund support for reforestation.

Dave Parent suggested there may be an opportunity to support timber stand improvement (TSI) via investing in TSI jobs through a Department of Employment and Economic Development program.

Request an additional $3.0 million per year (one-time funding) for timber sales staff:
Dave Zumeta stated that the language for the recommendation came directly from Forestry Division staff. Forrest added that this is the same language that was used in a request to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) in response to the 2011 blowdown. To expedite cleanup and recovery, timber on state lands was sold for about 35 to 50 cents on the dollar. Now, the Division doesn't have the funds to reforest the sites.

Council members discussed the relationship between blowdown clean up and fire protection, noting that events such as these should be supported by some sort of disaster relief program or, perhaps, by fire protection programs. While Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds may cover the cost of opening roads or replacing roofs, there is no reimbursement for loss of investment (e.g., if the forest blows down, the landowner gets the salvage value). There is currently no state program that would provide funding in these situations. Wayne suggested this may be an

issue to address during the September discussion. Mary commented that, for legislators and the public, it would be valuable to include the location of blowdown reforestation work in the request.

Request $ 4.0 million for silviculture and roads programs:
Forrest noted that many of the recommendations are General Fund requests and suggested that it may be valuable for the Council to prioritize recommendations. He suggested that the specific state timber harvest target be removed from the recommendation.

Partial restoration of the MFRC budget:
Dave Zumeta stated that the MFRC has lost $200,000 in annual funding over the last two years; this recommendation would restore 50% of that amount. While the partial restoration is not sustainable in the long-term, the additional amount would keep the Council operations afloat. He suggested that the Council should be funded by the General Fund to avoid potential bias toward forestry interests that provide funding. The whole point of the Council is to have a broad array of interests around the table. Mary asked whether it would be unreasonable to ask for a return to former funding levels. Dave responded that he felt such a request would not likely be successful.

Partial restoration of funding for the Interagency Information Cooperative:
Alan Ek stated that this recommendation would provide roughly $200,000 to address particular industry needs such as the application of harvest models to improve planning for communities. Funding for the IIC was dropped out of the budget one year ago. The resolution would enable continued harvest scheduling work with the counties. Mike felt it would be beneficial to have funding back to support the interaction with the counties.

General Fund appropriation of $160,000 for Timber Utilization and Marketing program:
Forrest stated that the Timber Utilization and Marketing program has taken a significant hit over the past few years. Dave Zumeta added that the program is particularly valuable to smaller businesses and the secondary forest products industry. The analyses and directories they produce are viewed favorably.

Bob Stine reflected on Forrest's suggestion to prioritize requests and asked Dave Zumeta to comment on the order of the recommendations in the resolution. Dave responded that the list intentionally presented the non-General Fund recommendations first and an attempt was made to list them in priority order.

<u>Statutory Recommendations</u>
Increase interstate truck weights:
Wayne suggested that the recommendation could be sent to the congressional delegation from the Governor or the Commissioner. Shaun suggested that the MFRC may want to work with the Great Lakes Forest Alliance on this issue. Forrest noted that Minnesota First Stop may also be a vehicle to address this issue. Bob Stine requested that this request be further developed for discussion in September.

Up-front tax exemption (versus rebate) for forest industry capital equipment:
Wayne explained the issue, noting that when a business invests in capital equipment the rebate may take up to 18 months to arrive due to the timing of tax preparation and filing. Many smaller

businesses do not file for the rebate. This recommendation would result in no revenue change for the state, but the value of the "float" is approximately $60 million. Gene commented that the issue may be bigger timing: when businesses do not file, the state keeps the money.

Property tax policy revisions for equitable treatment of rural landowners:
Wayne commented on former Governor Pawlenty's cap on Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) payments and subsequent inclusion in the statute. Litigation related to the change is ongoing. The property tax system in Minnesota, particularly with the SFIA cap, is not suitable to retention of industry land holdings. Shaun noted that even conservation easements do not always provide adequate property tax relief.

In-kind staff support for legislatively-mandated private lands study:
Bob Stine stated that this recommendation may not be appropriately labeled a statutory request. He suggested that this could be included as an additional recommendation to the Commissioner. Shaun suggested that a reference could be made to stewardship grants the Landscape Program has received as a potential way to leverage additional resources.

Streamline environmental review and permitting:
Alan noted that streamlining is a common notion of late. He distributed draft statutory suggestions regarding environmental review and noted that the specifics suggested would aid smaller firms coming back into the industry, perhaps county-size energy projects, or upgrades of mills. Alan reviewed his recommendations. Wayne suggested that, in interest of brevity, the language in the resolution should remain and additional language should be reviewed for further Council discussion at the September meeting.

Susan commented that she had suggested the language be revised to "Cautiously streamline environmental review…" Dave responded that Susan's comment was received during development of the resolution and noted that he received some negative feedback on the suggested revision. Alan stated that the state has a three-million cord harvest. If a project aims to harvest an additional 150,000 cords, the harvest would represent only five percent of the statewide harvest, which is less than one percent of the total forest resource. Wayne added that, in this day and age for companies working in a global setting, timing is one of the most difficult issues. For example, in the time required to complete the Thunderhawk Environmental Impact Statement, Blandin specked and built a mill in Germany with tighter permit limits. Bob Stine stated that he would work to develop some language that meets both needs and ask the Council to revisit this recommendation. Wayne was supportive of addressing the recommendation in September.

In light of timing, Bob stated that the Council would address the resolution after lunch to allow the guest presentation to progress.

Facing the Emerald Ash Borer in Minnesota: improving communication and engagement among stakeholders
Dave Zumeta introduced Kathy Quick, Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs. He noted that several Council members and staff participated in one of Kathy's focus group discussions related to the emerald ash borer (EAB). Kathy's presentation today will describe some of her research findings. A final report related to the research was distributed.

Kathy's research focuses on how agencies involve the public in meaningful way. She provided an overview of the project, which was designed to identify stakeholder perceptions of the EAB, preferences for interventions, and implications for management and policy. The study included an iterative identification of themes and was focused on five areas of policy improvement: capacity building, synergies and opportunity costs, communicating uncertainties/limitations, engaging stakeholders, and roles and responsibilities.

Kathy discussed public perspectives on EAB, noting that most members of the public are concerned about the aesthetic value for their boulevard and are not focused on economic impacts. There is a wide diversity of views among, and even within, individuals regarding how big the problems is, how important the issue is relative to other problems, and optimism or pessimism related to EAB.

Among stakeholders, uneven attention is given to the effects of EAB (type and scale of impact). EAB is recognized as an opportunity and a challenge. Implications for management and management strategies depend upon each individual's perspectives on the issue.

Kathy reviewed management options considered by focus group participants. Most people have misgivings about a ***"Do nothing"*** approach and their perceptions were very dependent on context. Uncertainty was cited as a reason for doing something as well as for doing nothing. There was widespread support for ***surveying and monitoring***, although limited resources to monitor were recognized. Specialists also questioned the adequacy of monitoring technology. Suggestions related to this option include better leveraging of first detector responders, increased relationships with the tree care industry, and research requirements for conducting surveys and monitoring efforts on privately owned lands. ***Wood management*** was probably the most broadly accepted intervention option for preventing EAB "jumps". Among the general public there is high support for ***proactive planting*** but very low support for ***preventative cutting***. Removing large areas of ash is not desirable, but removing unattractive trees is acceptable. The ecological benefits of diversifying species are recognized. ***Chemical treatment*** is the most contested of the management options across all different groups for a variety of reasons. ***Bio-control*** was the preferred option in rural or inaccessible areas versus a do nothing approach. Specialists exhibited higher confidence regarding the safety of bio-control and lower confidence regarding its efficacy. Public perceptions reflected the opposite relationship (low confidence in safety/high confidence in efficacy).

Strengths related to EAB communication and education include the number of concerted efforts in multiple venues (e.g., government websites and brochures are seen as good resources), a number of "champions" that seek to communicate and educate as well as some active neighborhood groups, a high level of trust in management agencies, a generally high level of trust in scientists, and good media coverage. The focus on unidirectional communication to the public is a significant problem. Also, forest and tree care professionals as well as master gardeners are underused. Results from this study indicate that the existing unidirectional dialogue should be extended to include additional stakeholders and become more bidirectional.

Dave Zumeta commented on the need for more proactive discussion with industrial and residential wood fuel consumers. Kathy responded that the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee has had discussions in which utilities have participated but those have been more opportunistic.

Continued discussion on resolution regarding budgetary and statutory recommendations
Increased emphasis on high quality timber:
Wayne stated that high quality wood is important for competitive ability and is significant for a number of environmental considerations (e.g., requires fewer chemicals in processing).

Revision of M.S. 216B to base electrical rates on the cost of providing service:
Wayne stated that industrial and commercial operations subsidize residential electrical use, based on the current system used by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to establish electrical rates. For example, the last rate increase for Minnesota Power was 16% versus a 4% residential increase. Shaun asked whether there was a broader constituency to consider. Wayne responded that there are a lot of chambers of commerce involved but noted that industry is an especially heavy energy user.

With respect to an emphasis on quality wood, Shaun asked whether the pressure on state lands to produce wood would impact efforts to produce quality wood. Dale responded that "quality" in this case refers to wood cut at rotation age (versus older). Bob Stine suggested that this recommendation be placed in another section (i.e., not under statutory recommendations).

Shawn Perich noted discomfort with the recommendation related to utility rates and asked about the potential impact on rural homes and businesses. Steve Betzler (Minnesota Power) responded that only three utilities are regulated by the PUC; the recommendation would not apply to rural cooperatives. Shawn indicated the answer was insufficient to enable his support for the entire resolution.

The Council decided to postpone the recommendation related to streamlined environmental review for further discussion in September. Council members proceeded with discussion on the recommendation regarding M.S. 216B and the potential impacts from a revision in electrical rates. Gene was uncomfortable with a broad recommendation from the Council on an issue not well understood. He suggested the Council consider alternative language that would focus on how current rates are unfair to the industry. Wayne suggested the recommendation could be revised to "…require the Public Utilities Commission to base electrical rates for forest products companies primarily on the cost of service."

Shaun Hamilton moved, and Dave Parent seconded, to approve the development of a letter from MFRC Chair Bob Stine to DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr that includes the discussed recommendations.
The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of a second potential resolution in response to request from DNR Commissioner Landwehr about maintaining and growing the forest products industry
Bob Stine reviewed the list of potential recommendations to be considered for approval by the Council in September. He stated that a revised draft of the resolution would be distributed to Council members for consideration before the next meeting. Alan suggested that the recommendations be prioritized and the bullets be changed to numbers.

Potential recommendations discussed included: implementing silvicultural practices in globally competitive forest types, streamlining state land exchange processes, better coordination of monitoring/certification, selling more DNR wood from acquired lands to add funds to the Forest Management Investment Account, shifting funding for reforestation on state administered land from bonding to General Fund, creating a fund to deal with catastrophic weather events, reviving the Blue Ribbon Committee or an elevated sub-cabinet, funding for forest inventory, promotion of biorefining opportunities, increased research in support of natural resource industries, targeted and consistent

messaging of organizations and resources available to support the industry, development of a low-interest loan program for wood-using businesses, and increased funding for continuing education opportunities.

Wayne suggested that the Council receive a presentation on the assessment of Minnesota's logging infrastructure from Dr. Blinn.

Forest management guideline review process and recommendations
Rob Slesak distributed a packet of information related to the guideline review process and recommendations. The peer and public review of proposed revisions is complete. Rob reviewed the criteria used to identify peer reviewers (largely based on criteria from past processes). He also reviewed the peer preview process. Reviewers were asked to qualitatively rank whether proposed changes were good or bad based on practicality, effectiveness, scientific basis, and flexibility.

The public review lasted 20 days. Comments were collected via an online survey. Eight responses were submitted (DNR, Sierra Club, Minnesota Audubon, American Fisheries Society, Society of American Foresters, St. Louis County, Trout Unlimited and the Ruffed Grouse Society).

In general, public comments supported revisions related to infrastructure, biomass and leave trees guidelines. The proposed revisions to riparian management zone (RMZ) guidelines were not well supported. The main point of contention was the proposed 60 ft^2 RMZ versus the 75 ft^2 RMZ recommended by the Riparian Science Technical Committee.

In general, practitioner rankings were all quite supportive of the proposed revisions. There was also generally wide support for guideline changes among the scientific rankings. However, the science and effectiveness regarding leave tree guideline revisions were not accepted. Half of the scientists were supportive of changes, half were not supportive.

Rob reviewed examples of small items needing attention, such as providing definitions of uncommon terms and the addition of sidebars, and reviewed larger issues requiring attention. Rob then made the following comments for Council consideration:

1) Recommendations related to infrastructure guideline revisions were not "intuitive" (e.g., a 29.9 acre harvest is given much larger infrastructure than 30 acre harvest). While there was widespread support for the change in general, the categories are not intuitive. The Site-level Committee is recommending that we keep the proposed recommendation as is because recommendations are based on observed trends and patterns in the monitoring data.
2) Half of the scientific reviewers argued against including economic considerations in the leave tree guidelines. The primary arguments were that this was already implicit in other considerations, only non-merchantable trees will be retained, and the revision could have impacts on wildlife and stand structure. The Site-level Committee recommendation is to add additional language to provide context for the economic considerations.
3) Half of the scientific reviewers were against including RMZ area in the leave tree guideline, primarily because upland areas would not be as well protected. The Site-level Committee recommendation is to leave as is. Justification is that the original recommendation was central to the overall "package" (i.e., willing to accept potential impact to uplands for

greater riparian protection, only about 20% of harvests contain RMZ areas, and some of those harvests with RMZs will still have interior trees).

4) The majority of public comments did not support the Residual Basal Area (RBA) recommendation for RMZs. Most reviewers called for use of the RSTC-recommended 75 ft^2 RMZ. The Site-level Committee recommends keeping the revision as is. Justification is that 60 ft^2 is the minimum for fully stocked stands and this provides continuity with previous recommendations as well as parity with recommendations from nearby states.

Shaun asked whether there are any data regarding avoidance of RMZs. Rob responded that guideline monitoring indicates 50% of sites with RMZs have harvest activity within the RMZ. Shawn Perich noted that, on the other hand, RMZs may be regarded as no cut zones. As a result, all of the leave trees are within the RMZ and a greater harvest comes off of the upland.

Rob asked MFRC members to review the guideline review document. Final recommended revisions will be distributed by email. He also hopes to have the economic analysis completed by September.

Discussion of potential resolution to address invasive species concerns

Kathleen Preece stated that the IMC has addressed the Council's request regarding invasive species concerns. She asked Calder to provide an update for on the development of a resolution to address invasive species concerns.

Calder stated that he and the IMC will be trying to trying to formulate a recommendation in next couple of weeks and would appreciate any Council member input. He provided examples of native forest health threats as well as emerging and potential threats (e.g., Dutch elm disease, EAB, gypsy moth, oak wilt, thousand cankers disease, Asian long-horned beetle, mountain pine beetle, spruce bark beetle). The IMC has been looking at economic impacts (e.g., costs associated with non-native wood boring insects) and has been compiling examples of costs of expenditures related to controlling/treating invasive species. The Committee has reviewed existing frameworks available to address invasive species concerns (e.g., Minnesota's noxious weed law and the DNR invasive species guidelines). Other options considered include a MN Department of Transportation (MN-DoT) best practices handbook for roadside management, the comprehensive approach used in Wisconsin, and the Vermont approach. Forest certification frameworks have also been considered.

Based on a review of all of the information and alternatives, the IMC has identified a number of questions to address:

1) Is the problem of a magnitude that guidelines need to be considered?
2) Are existing frameworks sufficient?
3) Which policy frameworks lead us down sustainable pathway?
4) What other information needed?

The majority of the IMC felt the Council should consider guidelines, but there are issues regarding the degree of response and how prescriptive the guidelines should be. In addition, the majority of the IMC felt that current frameworks are insufficient to address invasive species.

The IMC is working to develop a response that best results in sustainable management of Minnesota's forests and will: use certification standards as a guide, be based on a regional

approach, require expanded guidelines, require a more comprehensive approach, and will increase investments in health and productivity. Identified information needs include: the extent of the problem and impacts, the effectiveness of treatment, the urgency of response, and potential ways forward.

Wayne asked if there are any studies that show how invasives spread. Calder responded that the Forest Service has been conducting a lot of research related to spread. Greg Bernu commented that MN- DoT has a mapping system that has been in place for five years. The data clearly demonstrate spread along the travel corridors. He commented that not many counties have a weed-free gravel policy. Mowing by the transportation agency and recreationalists also increase the spread.

Calder stated that the IMC will formulate a recommendation for Council in September.

Public communications to the MFRC
None.

MFRC Member Comments
Shawn Perich commented on his recent visit to the Canadian North Shore. Ontario is transitioning away from a forest-based economy and is reinvesting/transitioning to become a regional medical service center, as well as supporting technology industries and mining.

Kathleen Preece stated that Minnesota will host the National Tree Farm convention in 2013.

Mike Trutwin provided an update on the Verso paper mill. The damage assessment and estimates of the cost to rebuild have been completed. He anticipated a decision would be made public in August.

Forrest Boe stated that he is hopeful that the Governor will be able to participate in a Minnesota forest industry tour sometime in August

Kathleen Preece moved, and Mary Richards seconded, adjournment of the meeting. *The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.*