

Site-level Committee Meeting Summary

MN Interagency Fire Center, Grand Rapids, January 13, 2011, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Members present: Dale Erickson, Bob Lintelmann, Gene Merriam, Dave Parent (Chair), Shawn Perich, John Rajala, Mary Richards

Members absent: None

Staff: Rob Slesak

Guests: Tim O'hara, Dave Chura, Dick Rossman

The Committee began by evaluating additional information on two topics from the previous meeting: erosion control on segments and allowable infrastructure. Rob provided new language that was requested by the Committee which clarifies what “where needed or necessary” means for erosion control on segments (not approaches). The new language identified areas with slopes greater than 2%, low vegetative cover, and in close proximity to water. Dave proposed that proximity be changed to indicate potential for water quality impacts. The Committee agreed that this would more accurately emphasize the intent of the guideline, and the revised language was subsequently adopted for recommendation by all members. Rob summarized the infrastructure discussion that occurred at the last meeting, where members had agreed that the existing 3% could be unachievable but more information was needed to guide any change. The Committee then reviewed the additional information including compliance rates by harvest size and ownership, and potential impact scenarios. After review, the Committee recommended a three-tiered allowable infrastructure as follows: 3% for harvests greater than 30 ac., 5% for harvests 20-30 ac., and absolute infrastructure area not to exceed 1 ac. for harvests less than 20 acres in size. The Committee began evaluation of proposed changes to the leave tree guidelines, starting with a summary related to leave tree effectiveness. Discussion then focused on whether the scattered tree option should be removed from the guidelines. Most members agreed that there were times when use of either clumps or scattered trees would be appropriate, and were generally unresponsive of removing the scattered tree option. Much of the discussion was centered on issues related to logging operability and Silviculture. After much discussion, members recommended to identify that a combination of the two options is acceptable with a preference for clumps, and to emphasize that decisions should be based on achieving specific wildlife and Silvicultural conditions, and not ease of compliance. Members also recommended including information in the guidebook on scattered leave trees and logging operability.

Dick Rossman presented information related to development of the biomass harvesting guidelines including composition and expertise of the development group, issues that the group grappled with, and explanation of information and reasoning in support of the guideline recommendations. Rob referred members to a summary list of scoping comments related to the biomass guidelines, noting that many of the topics were similar to the ones which were grappled with during development. Several related questions were then posed to Dick by Committee members. Following Dick's presentation, Rob reviewed evaluation information related to the remaining leave tree topics, which was followed by discussion related to the specific topic of sawlog-size leave trees. No further decisions were made before adjourning. Rob stated that additional meetings will need to be scheduled to on the coming months in order to stay somewhat on schedule. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.