

Minnesota Forest Resources Council
Minutes of the Council's 16th Meeting
March 20, 1997
Best Western Kelly Inn, St. Paul, MN
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Bob Dunn, Paul Ellefson, Steve Eubanks, Jan Green, Alan Knaeble, Dick Knoll, Jack LaVoy, Norm Moody, Robert Oswald, Jerry Rose, Joe Wood

Council Members Absent: Judy Hewes, Marcie McLaughlin

Staff Present: Mike Kilgore, Sarah Risser

Call to Order

Paul Ellefson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Members of Earth First! demanded the Council's attention, requiring initial agenda items to be postponed.

Earth First! Visit

Although Earth First! was not on the agenda, Paul Ellefson welcomed the group and asked them to voice their concerns. Council members listened respectfully as Earth First! read their Forest Position Paper which expressed: 1) a call for an immediate ban on timber harvesting activities, 2) the belief that functioning forest ecosystems and the organisms that live therein have intrinsic value, 3) the view that clear-cutting causes irreparable damage to biological diversity. In response, Paul asked Council members to introduce themselves and discuss their perspective on Minnesota's forests. All Council members voiced a deep respect for Minnesota's forests or a concern for their continued health.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Jerry Rose moved to approve the February 20, 1997 minutes. Motion passed.

Approval of Agenda

Given the unexpected discussion with Earth First!, Paul Ellefson suggested postponing the discussion on recent communications to the Council as well as the Chair and Executive Director's Report.

Motion: Norm Moody moved to approve the March 20, 1997 meeting agenda incorporating Paul's suggested change. Motion passed.

Revised Timelines: Timber Harvesting/Forest Management Guidelines Procedures

Mike Phillips reviewed the proposed guideline development schedule with the Council noting that while technical teams are trying to schedule more frequent meetings, many team members are volunteers with other responsibilities. Mike reminded the Council that the guideline development process is just entering its 12th month of work and that similar processes, such as BMP development, have taken 2.5 - 3 years to complete.

In response, many Council members expressed concern that the proposed timelines are inconsistent with those indicated in the Council's Biennial Report and indicated a willingness to provide support with additional resources if needed.

Paul Ellefson suggested staff work with the technical team leaders to explore opportunities to provide additional support to the technical teams so that the guideline development process is consistent with the target dates stated in the Biennial Report.

Motion: Dick Knoll moved to table the discussion of revising the guideline development process timeline. Motion passed pending additional information from the technical teams.

Update: Timber Harvesting and Forest Management Guideline Development

Mike Phillips indicated the Riparian Zone Technical Team has formed a subcommittee to evaluate existing Best Management Practices by April 22, 1997. On Tuesday April 25, 1997 individuals from the Division of Waters at the DNR will present maps depicting non-open water wetlands. The Soils Technical Team completed its work on basic compaction guidelines.

The following individuals were recommended to serve on the technical teams: Norm Deschampe (nominated by Jack LaVoy) for the Wildlife Team, and Jim Brun and Jim Jones (nominated by Jerry Rose) for the Soils and Riparian Teams respectively. There was some discussion regarding the appropriateness of having one individual serve on more than one technical team. It was generally agreed that this may be deemed appropriate in cases with a definite need.

Motion: Jerry Rose moved to approve the three new additions to the technical teams. Motion passed. Dick Knoll dissented.

Report of the Ecological Services Budget Subcommittee

Bob Dunn reported on the work and recommendations of the Ecological Services Budget Subcommittee.

Motion: Bob Dunn moved to approve the recommendations dealing with money appropriations of the ecological services budget subcommittee. Motion passed. Alan Knaeble dissented.

Update: Research Advisory Committee's Strategic Research Assessment

Sarah Risser presented an overview on recent activities of the Research Advisory Committee and discussed progress made on the Strategic Research Assessment document. There will be a public forum to discuss priority research needs in Minnesota on Wednesday March 23, 1997 from 6:00 - 9:00 in room 110 of Green Hall. Sarah encouraged Council members to attend this forum and spread the word.

Discussion: Draft SFRA Monitoring Programs Development Procedures Document

Mike Kilgore presented an overview of the Monitoring Programs Development Procedures Document. Mike indicated that the document clarifies how the monitoring programs called for in the SFRA will be developed. Mike includes a discussion of the three major monitoring programs: forest resources, practices and compliance monitoring, effectiveness. Council members provided comments on the draft document. Mike indicated that a revised draft will be prepared based on Council feedback and presented for approval in April.

Discussion: Landscape-Based Forest Resource Planning and Coordination

Dave Miller discussed his accomplishments toward the landscape-level planning initiative including meeting with Council members, interested stakeholder groups, and planning and organizing work shops. In addition, Dave provided an overview of work he anticipates completing over the next few months.

After some discussion, the Council concluded that they will hold a two day meeting on June 18th and 19th.

Motion: Janet Green moved to revise time lines regarding the landscape-based forest resource planning and coordination effort. Motion passed.

Chairs Remarks

Paul Ellefson has met with a number of interested groups: FAN and the environmental community, industry, DNR, Jack Rajala and Terry Weber. During Paul's meeting with the Partnership it became apparent that the Partnership was concerned about outside perceptions and that the Partnership is dedicated to the implementation of the Sustainable Forest Resources Act.

Paul thanked Mike Kilgore and all of the Council members who have put in time at the Capitol.

Executive Directors Report

Mike Kilgore mentioned that Meg Hanish has prepared a public education video and that interested Council members may help review the script at the DNR on Friday March 21, 1997.

Communications to the Council

Earth First! sent a list of demands to the Council. On behalf of the Council, Paul Ellefson will write a formal response to this letter.

Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership

Jack Rajala commented that there is a perception that the Partnership is a "negative" for the Council. Jack emphasized that the Partnership derives its purpose and takes its cues from the Council. In closing Jack emphasized that coordination is more important than planning.

Terry Weber brought the Council up-to-date on his recent projects including:

Completion of an annual report for the Partnership including goals toward sustainable forestry, interest in collaboration, and progress made. This report has been distributed to the Governor and legislature. Investigating an approach to landscape-level planning including a framework for a vision statement and a resolution to guide partnership activities including: 1) landscape-level planning that recognizes individual ownership objectives; 2) increased efficiency and effectiveness of prepared forest plans. Guideline development.

Terry expressed appreciation to Mike Phillips for encouraging Council staff to make presentations to the Partnership including.

Council Member Comments

Paul Ellefson distributed a copy of a University of Minnesota publication, *Sustaining Minnesota's Renewable Natural Resource-Based Industries*. He has been approached by Dean Sullivan and the Provost of professional studies, Jean Allen to write a letter to the new President on behalf of the Council, welcoming the new president and emphasizing the importance of Minnesota's forests.

Jack LaVoy Mentioned that MFI has had much contact with legislators and that MFI has put together an update on the progress made since completing the GEIS

Steve Eubanks Distributed a fact sheet on the Chippewa National Forest

Janet Green requested that staff investigate Vermont's Forest Resource Advisory Council specifically their forest change analysis. The Sigurd Olsen center asked Jan to participate on part of a five member team. Her role is to deal with policy and public relations.

Bob Oswald mentioned the new brochure out for the Wood Fiber Employees Joint Legislative Council. He has been spending considerable time at the capitol.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Meeting

The next Minnesota Forest Resources Council meeting will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 17, 1997.

Motion: Dick Knoll moved to adjourn the March 20th Council meeting. Motion passed.

The Council adjourned at 4:00 p.m.