

# **Minnesota Forest Resources Council**

Meeting Minutes — April 24 and 25, 2000

Gunflint Lodge — Grand Marais, MN

**Council Members Present:** Wayne Brandt, Greg Damlo, Betsy Daub, Joe Day, Jan Green, Rich Holm, John Jordan, Steven Daley Laursen, Gene Merriam (chair), Norm Moody, Brad Moore, Ron Nargang, Bob Oswald, Dave Parent, Shawn Perich, Jim Sanders, Roger Scherer

**Council Members Absent:** none

**Staff Present:** Mike Kilgore, Chris Edgar, Sara Eliason, Dave Miller, Chad Skally

## **Monday, April 24, 2000**

Council members and staff participated in a tour to observe and discuss the impacts to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Superior National Forest from the July 4, 1999 windstorm. They also toured the Hedstrom Sawmill.

## **Tuesday, April 25, 2000**

### **Welcome and Chair's Remarks**

Gene Merriam called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed guests Jerry Rose, Tim Miller and Rick Horton.

### **Public Input/Communication to the MFRC**

Gene Merriam distributed copies of his response to a letter from Clyde Hanson regarding the residency requirement for participation in the landscape planning and coordination program's regional forest resource committees.

Gene also provided copies of a letter from Judy Johnson of Bemidji, MN.

### **Approval of December 14, 1999 Meeting Minutes**

*Motion:* Bob Oswald moved to approve the March 28, 2000 meeting minutes. Jim Sanders seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **Approval of Agenda**

*Motion:* Norm Moody moved to approve the April 25, 2000 agenda. Dave Parent seconded the motion. The motion passed.

## **Executive Director Report**

In his report to the MFRC, Mike Kilgore discussed the following items:

**TMDL Letter**—The letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (from the MFRC, the MN Pollution Control Agency, the MN Department of Natural Resources and the MN Department of Agriculture along with a cover letter from Governor Ventura) regarding proposed changes to the Total Maximum Daily Load and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System has not yet gone out. Mike will continue tracking progress on this effort.

**Lawsuit**—Gene Merriam has authorized Mike to assist the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Minnesota Attorney General's Office in fact-finding activities regarding the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy's challenge of the environmental review for the Boise Cascade mill expansion in International Falls. Mike will provide information about the MFRC, the Sustainable Forest Resources Act and Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Timber Harvesting and Forest Management in Minnesota, all of which are referred to in the lawsuit.

**MFA request to meet**—In a letter dated January 14, 2000, Jim Lemmerman, President of the Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA), requested a meeting with Gene Merriam and Jack Rajala, chair of the Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership. This meeting will take place sometime in late May or early June.

**Legislative Activity**—The forest property tax study is still alive in both the Minnesota House of Representatives and Senate. If funding for the project goes through, the MFRC will work with the Department of Revenue to complete the study by the end of 2000.

**Budget**—Mike distributed an updated SFRA budget summary showing expenditures through March 2000.

**Brochure**—Mike showed the latest brochure on the SFRA and MFRC and encouraged council members to take as many as they could use.

**Future meetings**—The upcoming MFRC meetings are June 27 at the Cloquet Forestry Center near Cloquet, MN; August 8, location to be determined; and October 24 at Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center near Lanesboro, MN.

**Forestry proposals**—Mike pointed out that a list of forestry-related proposal submitted to the LCMR in 2000 was sent in the meeting packet. Jan Green noted that some proposals regarding forest resources such as wildlife and conservation corridors had been left off the list.

**Landscape program**—As per the requirements in the Sustainable Forest Resources Act, assessments for the MFRC’s north central and southeast landscape regions will be completed by the end of June.

### **MFRC Committee Reports**

**Guideline Implementation Monitoring**—Committee chair Dave Parent provided a one-page summary of the Guideline Implementation Monitoring Committee’s activities over the past month. Mike Phillips, committee staff, is running a calibration workshop on April 26-28 with the contractor who will be in the field this spring conducting on-site monitoring of timber harvest and forest management guideline implementation. Tech Pro is still working on the program for the field computers. Mike has found 93 sites to monitor, but has fewer nonindustrial private forest landowner sites than expected. He is working with the counties and local state forestry offices to locate additional NIPF sites.

**Landscape**—Ron Nargang, committee chair, updated the council on the Landscape Committee’s work. The spatial analysis of forest landscape conditions project is moving forward: the strategy team has met twice already and the technical team will form in early May. At their meeting on May 10, the committee will discuss the products the MFRC is looking for from the landscape committees. These will likely not be specific outcomes, but provide the more concrete guidance for which the regional forest resources committees have asked. Dave Miller, landscape program coordinator, held three public informational meetings in April in the North Central landscape region. About 15 people attended each meeting and several have signed up to participate on the North Central regional forest resource committee. The May 18 meeting to bring together all groups with some type of landscape/ecoregion planning is set; so far 15 groups have signed up to participate.

### **NE Landscape Committee Road Coordination Initiative\***

Ron Nargang walked the MFRC through the road coordination project proposal from the Northeast Regional Forest Resource Committee Coordination Work Group. Council members noted that the MFRC should actively facilitate use of the products from this project (step 7 of the plan) to translate this effort into better planning and coordinated use of forest roads.

*Motion:* Ron Nargang moved that the MFRC support the road coordination project proposed by the Northeast Regional Forest Resource Committee Coordination Work Group, facilitate step 7 of the plan and communicate this support by letter from the chair. Jan Green seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **Response to Riparian/Seasonal Pond Guideline Peer Reviews\***

Ron Nargang, chair of the ad hoc task group which Gene Merriam established in March to work out a response to the riparian and seasonal pond guideline peer review, discussed each segment of the group’s proposed response. He noted that the group worked together very well but could

not reach consensus on the full range of actions the MFRC should take. Each member of the task group (Betsy Daub, Wayne Brandt, Steven Daley Laursen, Brad Moore, Ron Nargang, and Dave Parent) agreed that the MFRC should carry through on the proposed actions. Betsy Daub, however, did not agree that the proposed actions are a thorough response to the peer reviews. Betsy distributed a letter she wrote to Gene Merriam outlining her interpretation of the peer reviews, proposing changes to the guidelines, and stating her reasons for not supporting the task group's report.

Some council members agreed that the presentation of the riparian guidelines in the guidebook could be strengthened, but that this should happen in 2003 when the full guidebook is reviewed and, if needed, revised. Ron Nargang noted that the current guidelines are a significant advance over where Minnesota was just a few years ago and that the science on riparian areas is not definitive and doesn't provide one ideal width for riparian management zones. Jim Sanders noted that in accepting the task group's proposed responses to the peer review, the MFRC also is accepting that there is disagreement on the width that riparian management zones should be.

Council members commented that the actions in the task group report are good and asked staff to flesh out details of how each action might be implemented. Mike Kilgore offered some preliminary ideas for implementing actions in the report. For example, the council would work with the Minnesota Logger Education Program and Institute for Sustainable Natural Resources over summer and fall 2000 to develop education programs on riparian forest management for loggers and natural resource managers. Council members also emphasized that in carrying out these proposed responses to the peer review, the MFRC should work with relevant research and forest management planning projects going on now throughout Minnesota.

*Motion:* Ron Nargang moved that the MFRC adopt the task force report, recognizing that detail needs to be added, and staff will develop an implementation plan for short-term actions by August 2000 and medium- and long-term actions by October 2000. The MFRC chair also should respond in writing to the legislators Betsy Daub copied in her letter, explaining the council's findings and response. Norm Moody seconded the motion. The motion carried. Betsy Daub voted no.

### **Future MFRC Agenda Items**

Roger Scherer: Have a presentation of forest management in Canada to compare that to the U.S.

Rich Holm: Revisit discussion of and issue a resolution on the MFRC response to the impacts from the July 4, 1999 windstorm in northern Minnesota.

Ron Nargang: Talk about current research initiatives that look at forest management activities and harvesting in forest riparian areas.

### **Public Input/Comments to the MFRC**

none

**Adjourn**

Gene Merriam adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Eliason