

Minnesota Forest Resources Council Meeting
Cloquet Forestry Center
May 22, 2001
Cloquet, MN

Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC or Council) Members Present Wayne Brandt, Betsy Daub, Janet Green, Tom Day (alternate for Greg Damlo), Wayne Hammer, Rich Holm, Gene Merriam (Chair), Norm Moody, Brad Moore, Tom Duffus (alternate for Ron Nargang), Bob Oswald, Dave Parent, Shawn Perich, Jim Sanders, Dave Sterr (alternate for Joe Day) and Roger Scherer

Council Members Absent Greg Damlo, Joe Day, Steve Daily-Laursen, and Ron Nargang

Staff Present Amie Brown, Chris Edgar, Mike Kilgore, Dave Miller, Mike Phillips, and Chad Skally

Welcome/Chair's Remarks (Gene Merriam)

Council members and the public were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Public Input/Communication to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council

Rick Horton shared with the Council information about a March 29, 2001 conference held in Duluth, MN called "The Role of Young Forests and Their Role in the Conservation of Biological Diversity." The Ruffed Grouse Society, the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the USDA Forest Service, and other partners sponsored this event. A brochure from this event was available for Council members and the public.

Approval of March 27, 2001 Meeting Minutes

A correction was made on page one, to reflect that Betsy Daub attended the March 27, 2001 meeting. Also under the heading Committee Reports and White Pine Information Highlights, the last bullet should read, "There may be additional acres of white pine present among the other cover types."

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved to approve the March 27, 2001 meeting minutes as corrected. Jim Sanders seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Approval of May 22, 2001 Meeting Agenda

It was requested that Shawn Perich be added to the agenda to discuss forest habitat use and needs by waterfowl.

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved to approve the May 22, 2001 meeting agenda as amended. Brad Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Executive Director Report (Mike Kilgore)

FIA Information Cooperative The goal of this cooperative is to present and describe current Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data to the public in a more user friendly and timely manner. The USDA Forest Service's FIA program changed its statewide forest inventory from a 10-15-year cycle to a 5-year cycle during which 20% of the forest inventory plots will be visited annually. There have been 2 years of plot data collected under the new system. The FIA Information Cooperative includes the North Central Research Station, the University of Minnesota, and the MFRC. The cooperative's first report is expected to be ready this fall.

Future Council Meeting The next MFRC meeting will be on July 24, 2001 in Cloquet, MN and then on September 25, 2001, the location to be announced.

Executive Director's Resignation Mike Kilgore announced that he would resign as executive director of the MFRC to accept an opportunity to join the Department of Forest Resources faculty at the University of Minnesota.

MFRC Work and Spending Plan A question was raised about the need for an approved work and spending plan prior to the next Council meeting.

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved that the Council delegate the authority for preparation and submission of the spending plan [to DNR] for the coming biennium to the MFRC Personnel and Finance Committee. This spending plan will then come back before the Council at the July meeting. Dave Parent seconded the motion. The motion passed.

MFRC Committee Reports

Forest Resources Information Management (Chris Edgar)

The contractor's report has been completed and the Committee met via conference call to discuss the report. The Committee will meet again to discuss the executive summary and develop a series of recommendations for the Council.

Landscape Planning/Coordination (Chris Edgar)

The Landscape Committee met in May and notes were included in the council mailing. A Spatial Analysis Project update was handed out. There are five components to the project including: (1) aerial photo sample and interpretation; (2) GLO survey notes; (3) spatial analysis of derived data sources; (4) future scenario modeling; and (5) synthesis and interpretation of modeling. The spatial analysis sample area covers much of northern Minnesota including the Northern Superior Uplands and the Drift & Lakes Plains ecological classifications sections. From this area 42 sample sites were randomly identified. Several contracts have been executed for the above-mentioned components.

Guideline Implementation Monitoring (Mike Phillips)

The Committee has not met since the last council meeting. An update on the MFRC Implementation Monitoring Program was prepared and distributed by Mike Phillips.

Louise Yount relayed to the Council that 24 natural resource professionals attended the April 17, 2001 guideline introductory workshop. Since the May Council meeting Ms. Yount has worked with continuing education instructors to include components of the guidelines into their courses and will continue to do so.

Personnel and Finance (Gene Merriam)

The Committee has not met since the last council meeting.

Blowdown Task Force

An update was presented to the Council about the tasks force's ideas and information gathering. Many of the important findings and recommendations from the information gathered is outside of the mission

of the Council. The MFRC agreed that the task force should decide how the information that was gathered can best be used.

Written Communication to the MFRC

Gene Merriam received a letter of response from DNR Commissioner Alan Garber. This letter will be discussed later during the meeting as part of the Forest Summit discussion.

Legislative Outcomes (Mike Kilgore)

To date, the environment and agriculture budget bill has not been finalized. Going into the conference committee the House proposal funded the MFRC at full funding (1,147, 000 per year) and Senate at \$750,000 per year. Both houses have agreed to a six-year extension of SFRA.

Language has been circulated in both the House and Senate to support a study (\$100,000) of the Master Logger certification program and other like programs and their potential here in Minnesota.

Forest Summit

A letter was sent from MFRC Chair Gene Merriam to DNR Commissioner Garber expressing concern about the public opportunity to attend the Forest Summit. The Commissioner sent a written response stating "...the Summit will have some arrangements (i.e. an observer gallery) for members of the public who show up uninvited to observe the proceedings." A copy of the letter from the Commissioner was distributed.

Mike Kilgore stated that the MFRC will lead a panel at the Forest Summit to discuss the Sustainable Forest Resources Act, the demonstration forest, and the opportunities and challenges related to the Commissioner's vision.

Riparian Management Field Key (Amie Brown)

One of the responses to the riparian area and seasonal pond peer review focuses on continuing education, planning, and stewardship. Last fall, key people involved in logger and natural resources training and education met to discuss how to incorporate the peer review findings into education, planning, and stewardship efforts. The conclusion of this meeting was that a teaching tool in the form of a decision-making field key would be very useful. The key will be used as a teaching tool during a riparian area focused workshop.

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved the council accept the riparian key and that work continue to go forward to print the key and work with Center for Continuing Education and Minnesota Logger Education Program to create a riparian workshop. Jim Sanders seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Riparian Forest Monitoring Report (Dave Heinzen, DNR-Division of Forestry)

The report was prepared in response to legislation that directs the DNR, with program advice from the MFRC, to monitor and evaluate the following aspects of riparian forests: 1) extent and condition of riparian forests; 2) extent to which harvesting occurs within riparian management zones and seasonal ponds; and 3) use and effectiveness of timber harvesting and forest management guidelines applied in riparian management zones and seasonal ponds (MS § 89A.05, subd 4).

This analysis recommends three major areas that should be pursued to improve knowledge and understanding of Minnesota's riparian areas and how it impacts timber harvesting and other forest management activities.

1. Current projects need to be extended and new projects implemented to monitor the extent to which timber harvesting and forest management guidelines (Minnesota Forest Resources Council, 1999) are being used and if these guidelines are effective at minimizing timber harvesting and forest management impacts.
2. Additional funding is needed to extend ongoing projects such as guideline implementation monitoring and acquiring and analyzing satellite imagery to define harvest disturbance. Funding is also needed to implement new projects such as the one just approved by the LCMR to evaluate the effectiveness of the timber harvesting and forest management guidelines.
3. Education efforts made by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and the DNR to teach landowners, loggers, and resource managers how to use the timber harvesting and forest management guidelines need to be continued.

Discussion: Process for Reviewing Timber Harvesting/Forest Management Guidebook

The MFRC is required to undertake a review of the timber harvesting/forest management guidebook. This review must be completed by the end of the next biennium (June 30, 2003). Mike Kilgore led the MFRC in a discussion on how the guidebook review process could be carried out. This discussion began by explaining the process by which the guidebook was prepared.

Major points of the Council's discussion included:

- The Council should decide if the guidebook revisions are needed.
- The Council will decide what to change.
- A scientific team should evaluate the guidelines for needed scientific changes.
- The implementation monitoring committee should provide input about needed changes based on the monitoring report.
- It is important to promote stability and support understanding of the current guidelines.
- The review process should be simple and intense.
- Are we meeting the goals of the MFRC and the people?
- An example of an area that may need revision based on implementation monitoring are the skid trail guidelines.
- Information from the PCRP should also be considered.
- A technical team of experts will be important to the process.
- Remember the three audiences NIPF, logger, and resource professional.
- Format of the guidebook is important.
- The guideline review is important, however, it should not be the sole focus of the council over the next 2 years.

Waterfowl and Forest Habitat (Shawn Perich)

It is believed that waterfowl do use forested areas for nesting habitat and migration however very little is known about its use of the forest. More information is needed about waterfowl use of the forest. After attending the MN Waterfowl Association's annual conference Mr. Perich thought that this was an important issue for the Council to consider. It was agreed that further information would be brought to the Council this fall.

Additions: Timber Harvesting/Forest Management Guidebook

Several scientists involved in the MFRC's peer review process offered suggestions for making the guidebook, *Sustaining Minnesota Forest Resources: Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines*, more user-friendly. In responding to these suggestions, a task force of the MFRC identified the need to prepare two additions to the guidebook: 1) a list of overarching principles to be considered

when applying site-level forest management practices; and 2) a key (index) to guide readers through the guidebook.

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved the council accept the additions to the guidebook and that work continue to go forward to print and distribute the material. Jim Sanders seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Future MFRC Agenda Items

Public Input/Communication to the MFRC

A proposal from Al Mitton was submitted to the Council.

Council Member Comments

- Wayne Brandt announced that Bruce Barker has retired and Dennis Lampey has been hired as his replacement.
- Brad Moore on behalf of the Council thanked Mike Kilgore for his work and commitment to the Council.

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,
Amie Brown