

MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes- November 13, 2001
Cloquet Forestry Center- Cloquet, MN

Council Members Present: Gene Merriam (Chair), Wayne Brandt, Janet Green, Steven Daley Laursen, Betsy Daub, Dave Parent, Jim Sanders, Eric Mayranen, (in lieu of Rich Holm), Dave Sterr, Shawn Perich, Norm Moody, Roger Scherer and Ron Nargang.

Council Members Absent: Brad Moore, Bob Oswald, Rich Holm, Wayne Hammer and Greg Damlo

Staff Present: Mike Phillips, Chad Skally, Cameron Gerarden, Jim Manolis, Dave Miller and Julie Heinz

Welcome and Chair's Remarks:

Gene Merriam welcomed us to the Cloquet Forestry Center and introduced people in attendance.

Chair Merriam introduced Mike Kilgore (former executive director of the Council). He asked that Mike come forward to be recognized for his six years of time, effort and contributions made to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council while he was executive director. On behalf of the Council, members made donations and purchased a "Brandenberg" framed print acknowledging their appreciation of his six years as executive director. Mike accepted the print and thanked the Council members for the gift.

Public Input/Communications to the MFRC: None

Approval of September 25, 2001 Meeting Minutes:

Wayne Brandt indicated he would like to take the minutes and make some corrections to the punctuations so they can be correct in the official record.

Minutes should indicate that Rick Horton was an alternate at the meeting for Shawn Perich.

Steven Daley Laursen asked that the July 24th minutes should be amended to read Bob Stine was the alternate for Steve.

Motion: Jim Sanders moved to approve the September 25, 2001 meeting minutes as corrected. Dave Parent seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

A letter from Eric Mayranen should have been included on the agenda. Guideline economic impact discussion was added at the end of the Executive Director's remarks.

Eric Mayranen will present his perspective after the Acting Director's update.

Motion: Wayne Brandt moved to approve the November 13, 2001 meeting agenda as amended. Jim Sanders seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Merriam also updated the Council members that Amie Brown, who had been Acting Director, left the Council to take a position with the United States House of Representatives. Mike Phillips has been filling in since Amie's departure.

Chairman Merriam updated the Council on the Executive Director hiring process. Since the last meeting, the Council received applications from 11 people. Four were selected for an interview (one opted out of the interview process); therefore only 3 were interviewed. There was one applicant that stood out amongst the others, and the committee required him to attend the 11/13/01 meeting so that the full Council could personally ask him questions. Dave Zumeta was introduced and asked to give the Council members an overview of his work history.

Dave Zumeta shared his past work and educational experiences with the Council and then members asked Dave some questions:

What do you think are some of the toughest issues and how would you go about addressing them?
(Jan Green)

Dave's reply:

- Biggest challenge is the budget, as there is always more to do than resources to do it. There will be tough decisions on how to spend the limited resources.
- Meeting deadlines for the guideline revision process and having it be a credible program. There is a lot of work to be done in the next two years.
- Landscape Program- Getting all the landscape committees up and running with the budget and staff is going to be a challenge.
- Monitoring- Creating a solid credible program for monitoring guideline compliance and effectiveness. Coordinating this effort with the research community without having a lot of money to dangle before them will be a real challenge. We have to follow through on the statutory requirements, focusing on major Council initiatives.

Dave Parent asked the applicant: "You indicate you have extensive experience with state and federal landowners; however, what is your experience with private landowners?"

Dave's reply: Worked for the state of Indiana for three years where 90% of the land is privately owned. He has also worked for with non-industrial groups and is very familiar with hardwood forest management. He has spent a great deal of time in the woods consulting with foresters and private landowners. In the early 1980's he focused on private forest owner's in Minnesota, getting to know field foresters and working with private landowner programs.

Eric Mayranen asked the applicant: Have you seen any model program or ideas that would/could provide more funding?

Dave's reply: Tough question-Mike Kilgore, Jerry Rose and I wrote a paper on sustainable forestry in Minnesota for a Pinchot Institute Conference in 1997. Some states were doing some pretty interesting things. Oregon was one of them. Frankly though, Minnesota is one of the top few states in the nation in terms of sustainable forestry. Dave strongly feels we can show high levels of compliance with guidelines and respect for private land ownership using voluntary, effective and cost effective approaches.

Jim Sander's question: You have indicated to us what needs to be worked on for now, but what do you envision for the future? What is the vision of the Council into the future, as far as setting us up for reauthorization?

- Dave referenced his reply to Jan's earlier question. The core work of the Council is to do a timely and credible job of the landscape, guideline and monitoring efforts.
- Make sure that guidelines have support of rank and file field managers. Do this by continuing training sessions and focus on new field staff to ensure they are enthusiastic about the guidelines.
- Focus on increasing compliance levels in areas where monitoring shows they are low.
- Landscape Coordination Program-has taken awhile to get going. It is time we connect the results of the program in a clear, measurable way with outcomes and land management activities on the ground. Focus, as we move south, needs to shift more to influencing comprehensive plans, local zoning and local government land use decisions.
- Focus on urban growth issues, engage this issue. It was a fairly minor issue when GEIS was developed but now it is much bigger as population growth rates of 20-30% in counties from the Twin Cities north to Cass County from 1990-2000 have had a huge impact on our ability to manage forests.

Chairman Merriam asked for *other questions, comments? Seeing none, are we prepared to act?*

Motion: Norm Moody moved to go ahead with the recommendation of the personnel and finance committee to hire Dave Zumeta as the new Minnesota Forest Resource Council Executive Director. Betsy Daub seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Merriam welcomed Dave to his new position. Dave will officially start on December 5, 2001; however, there was a staff meeting scheduled for December 4th that he will attend.

Acting Director Report

Mike Phillips has been the Council's Acting Director. Council members gave Mike a round of applause for the great job he has been doing juggling job duties. Mike appreciated the acknowledgement and noted he had a lot of help from Chad Skally and Cameron Gerarden.

Mike updated Council members:

- ❑ New indices for the 3 ring binders to make them more user friendly.
- ❑ Research Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes – five handouts. There was a statement by Dean Al Sullivan (RAC chair) that a few dollars for research dedicated by the Council is a lot better than no dollars. There was an implicit recognition by the Dean that some minimal level of financial support would be helpful to ensure the continued participation of RAC members.
- ❑ Would like to see the entity meet more often, look at the whole of research, its original vision.
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 - There has been a loss of interest as there has been very little money.
- ❑ Linkage between RAC, Council and Demonstration Forest. Conversation regarding seeking funds. Commissioner Garber stated he was not comfortable, at this time, to go to the LCMR for funding.
 - A recommendation was made that a member of the monitoring evaluation and research group (MERG) be appointed to the RAC. The recommendation of the RAC is that Jerry

- Niemi be appointed to the RAC representing the MERG. Council members discussed the reasons and whys for this recommendation and various concerns.
- Better linkage between the Demonstration Forest and the Council was discussed. Some members felt strongly this could be accomplished without adding another member to the RAC.
 - The Council should think about the RAC's structure and what the Council wants the RAC to do. Adding another representative would make the situation worse rather than better.
 - Wayne Brandt asked if Mike Phillips could set up a Demonstration Forest update for the next meeting. Mike said he would.
- Research Money Discussion-agreed to bring this back to the agenda for January.
 - Mike Phillips shared economic analysis update information. February is the deadline if the University is to get someone on board to undertake the analysis.
 - Mike shared information regarding Inventory and Analysis and FIA Management Cooperative. Information required in contract will be available by March.
 - 888 Telephone Number Problems (Public Concerns number)-Jan Green indicated that she has tried several times to activate and has had no response. Mike Phillips will check on where the phone number is going, so we can be sure it is being responded to.
 - Annual Report needs to be done by February 2002. The proposed layout was reviewed as well as the staff responsibilities for completing the various sections. Council members indicated that they wanted the section detailing strategic forest resources issues to be retained.
 - Landowner's Brochure-These will be sent out to four additional counties. 1,700 owners will be receiving these brochures in the next few days.
 - Guideline Addition-Anyone that had received a guidebook should be receiving the addition. A cover letter will be written, labels have already been made, and the addition will go out next week.
 - Mike Phillips said he would continue to identify guideline language revisions. Should be completed in early December. Mike continues to work with the guideline review technical Committee and will keep the Council updated on the progress.
 - Jan Green requested that Jan Hacker be added to the committee.
 - It was discussed that Eric Zenner, with his silvicultural knowledge, would be a good person to add. Mike Phillips said he would ask Eric to join the committee.

AGENDA ITEM ADDENDUM

Chairman Merriam asked Eric Mayranen (who had submitted a letter to Mike Phillips) to present his agenda item.

Eric to send the contents of correspondence between Associated Contract Loggers and the Council. The agreement states the Council's statutory responsibility to discuss offsetting adverse economic impacts. He feels this needs to be readdressed.

- ❖ Mike Phillips discussed a study proposal by Mike Kilgore and Charlie Blinn that would look at bidding sites with and without guidelines and identify the marginal economic effects of guideline implementation.
- ❖ If it is done in 2002 before the statutory deadline of 2003, there should be sufficient time in there for the Council to come to a conclusion.
- ❖ Mike indicated that statutory language also requires that the benefit side be analyzed. However, that is beyond the scope of the current proposal.
- ❖ Charlie Blinn and Mike Kilgore propose evaluating timber sales to see if there is a cost at the individual sale level of implementing guidelines.

Council discussion of economic study proposal

- ❖ Accept Eric's good reminder that when we get into summer, early fall, take a look at this topic...it is the law.
- ❖ Discussion on markets and other forces effects on the timber market.
- ❖ So much noise in this system, doing this study will not be useful.
- ❖ Would be helpful to have a presentation about working loggers, costs, pitfalls, seasons, basic issues ...Maybe we should be thinking more about working people?
- ❖ Eric provided the perspective that BMPs take time, driving around, leave areas, following guidelines take production time. If you are doing something other than logging, you are not making money.
- ❖ Ron Nargang shared he had visited this summer with loggers regarding BMPs. Ron suggested that we look into something like that next summer (field trip to the logger's sites).

FOREST WATER QUALITY BMP TRAINING PRESENTATION

Grant proposal presented by Mike Turner is outlined. Mike indicated that this project will be initiated either with funds from 319 grants or from other sources.

- Funding
- Timeline-mid December
- Has a high potential of acceptance
- Multi-organizational group has leadership to deliver this program
- Setting up for fall 2002 courses-currently looking for someone to write curriculum. Targeted at loggers, response to a survey on research professionals, appreciate the interaction and also have training needs for loggers, in specific, water quality and riparian.
- Pleased we are looking at the Demonstration Forest for sites for incorporation in the training programs.
- Question of when findings change, will they then have the ability to modify sites and do modifications according to the current needs?
- Council members stated their appreciation for the communication. Council members requested that they be e-mailed with the results of the 319 funding proposal and any other communication of interest. They can just e-mail the new director and he will make sure the Council members receive the correspondence.

Chairman Merriam made a request to move the 3:15 agenda up due to another commitment.

Mike Phillips asked to share an additional thought on the guideline review process. He expressed his concern that the proposed revisions provided to the Council were the focus of review. Mike wanted to make sure that all individuals and organizations understand that the guideline review is for the overall guidebook, not just the 61 issues that were laid out in the 9/28/01 proposed revision document submitted to the Council.

MFRC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Guideline Implementation Monitoring Committee

- Dave Parent provided an overview of implementation and monitoring. Dave met with Dave Heinzen, DNR- Resource Assessment Supervisor regarding site selection methodology.
- Mike Phillips referred to the \$240,000 grant to the DNR from the Council for doing the monitoring. Clarence Turner has 15% of his time committed to writing the riparian

report. Dave Heinzen will have all data ready in January for use in writing the riparian report.

Information Management Committee

- ❑ Cameron Gerarden summarized a number of problems with the Irland Report.
- ❑ The final report will be will be distributed by the January meeting.
- ❑ Norm Moody stated that this report presents us an opportunity to change our way of doing business.
- ❑ Cameron shared that he was a short-term hire and his last day at the Council will be December 15th.

Landscape Committee

- ❑ Ron Nargang reported that the NE and NC regional landscape committees are continuing to work on refining ecological goals; Chad is working with the University of Minnesota “Sustainable Development Committee” in the SE to consolidate key contact information in the West Central landscape.
- ❑ Dave Parent raised the same question he did at the Itasca meeting, “What will be the economic impact of any changes in managing the forests.”
- ❑ Wayne Brandt stressed the need for the Landscape Committee to look at the program to see if the process needs to be changed. It’s a good time to look at the process before we start in new landscape regions. He is also concerned about the balance between time spent on economics and ecological goals by the landscape committees.
- ❑ Ron Nargang will schedule a meeting of the Landscape Committee to discuss theses issues (meeting scheduled for December 20, 2001).

CHAIR COMMENTS

Chairman Merriam asked members to review Council meeting dates for 2002.

January 22, 2002	Cloquet
March 19, 2002	St. Paul
April 23, 2002	St. Paul
June 25, 2002	Tentative-St. John’s University
September 24, 2002	
November 19, 2002	

Chairman Merriam noted there are two items that are not on the agenda.

1. Letter from Al Mitton
2. Letter from Sierra Club

Chairman Merriam had copies of these letters distributed to the Council.

DISCUSSION OF MFI-TPA RESOLUTION

Jan Green submitted a proposed change of language for paragraph five, and distributed copies of the new language to Council members.

Motion: Ron Nargang moved to accept the new language of paragraph 5 to read:

“Whereas, a DNR program to monitor the practices and compliance of the timber harvesting and forest management guidelines has been inaugurated and shows a good baseline level of use of the guidelines (actually before the guidelines went into effect).”

Wayne Brandt seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Jim Sanders briefly discussed the litigation. He indicated that the status of the guidelines as stated in the District Court's decision is not accurate.

MFRC RESEARCH BUDGET

Mike Phillips described options for funding the research review, economic study, landscape proposal and soil compaction study.

- Mike Phillips reported that the RAC recommends spending the \$51,000 in Council research funds on priority research. The RAC recommended funding the Research Review at \$2,000, funding the soil compaction study and the economic study with other Council funds, and providing the majority of the research funds to the riparian research study by Blinn et al.
- The full Council needs to decide how the dollars will be spent.
- Soil Compaction Study- Mike indicated that it hasn't been discussed in any other proposal, but his perspective is that the study is worthy of Council support.
- Economic study could be funded with tax study dollars that were rolled over from previous fiscal years. Gene Merriam and Wayne Brandt, among others, were concerned about using the tax study funds for this purpose. Council staff were asked to further explore the options for use of these funds.
- Jim Sanders shared his view that the intent of the research review is to provide field managers with current and relevant research results that may be directly applicable to making on-the-ground management decisions. Both the Chippewa and Superior Forests intend to be well represented at the forum.
- It was recommended that support for the research review be approved at the level of \$2,000.

Council members discussed options for spending research dollars

- \$50,000 in the landscape program could do a great deal. Spatial analysis is an effective research project. Results from this work will enable the landscape program to move forward more rapidly.
- Council members discussed other options: Provide \$17,000 for the spatial assessment aspect of the landscape proposal.
- Determination that we are working with \$51,000 for forest resources research today. Suggestion that \$50,000 be spent on research and \$1,000 for research operations.
- Suggestion that we have a lot invested in the spatial project, it is a research project and it is ours, would like to consider \$15,000 for additional staff and let the new executive director sort it through.

Motion: Jan Green moved that \$17,000 be provided for spatial analysis research and modeling and \$2,000 for the research review seminar. Wayne Brandt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- Mike Phillips shared Mike Kilgore's comment that time is critical if the Council is to move forward and complete an economic study of guideline revisions.
- Dave Parent noted that the Council has committed to undertaking the economic study as part of the guideline review process.

- Jan Green commented on page 3 of the proposal, the part that is looking at past stumpage prices vs. setup activity, creating three different kinds of scenarios and feels that there is too much background noise in this study to get much meaningful data.
- Dave Parent reminded everyone that we have a timetable laid out and a statutory deadline to meet.
- Ron Nargang suggested we extend one step further for a meaningful assessment of needs, figure out how to go and raise some money (talk to private donors, public/private funding).
- Council will defer action on all the other items to our new executive director.

Acting Director Mike Phillips asked for Council to approve the Implementation Goal Report as currently written.

Motion: Jan Green moved to accept the Implementation Goal Report. Wayne Brandt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Riparian Report Presentation

Eli Sagor and Chad Skally presented their findings to the Council. Mike Kilgore (past Executive Director) had asked Chad and Eli to look at Riparian Guidelines in the context of site level and landscape level conditions.

Background on Project:

- February 99-Guidelines were printed
- July 99-State Legislature mandated peer review of riparian guidelines
- April 00-Peer review completed and Forest Resource Council responds with various actions
- One action's results presented to the Council at this meeting.

Council found the report very interesting and had various comments including:

- Make clear that you are talking about two different riparian definitions.
- Research based approach.
- RMZ definition that was used intentionally, it wasn't vague by chance.
- Trust issues in developing guidelines.
- Guidelines are not absolutes. The point is to provide people with alternatives.

Public Input/Comments to the MFRC

None.

Adjourn

Gene Merriam adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

