MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2002
St. Johns University - Collegeville, MN

Council Members Present: Gene Merriam – Chair, Jim Sanders, Matt Norton (in lieu of Jan Green), Bob Stine (in lieu of Steven Daley Laursen), Brad Moore, Wayne Brandt, Greg Damlo, Rich Holm, Ron Nargang, Norm Moody, Dave Sterr, Dave Parent, Bob Oswold, Wayne Hammer, Roger Scherer and Shawn Perich

Council Members Absent: Betsy Daub

Guests: John Bathke (alternate for Wayne Hammer), Mike Prouty (Forest Service – State and Private Forestry), Gina Childs (Forest Service – State and Private Forestry), Earl Leatherberry (Forest Service – North Central Research Station)

Staff: Dave Zumeta, Mike Phillips, Dave Miller, Chad Skally, Jim Manolis, Jenna Fletcher

Welcome
Tom Kroll welcomed the group to St. John's University and thanked those Council members who participated in a tour of the forest and arboretum on campus the day before.

Chair's Remarks
- The Legislature enacted MFRC's suggested deadline changes with no revision into the Sustainable Forest Resources Act.
- Ron Nargang, The Nature Conservancy, has been promoted from Assistant State Director to State Director.

Approval of May 23, 2002 Meeting Minutes*
Motion: Dave Parent moved, Wayne Hammer seconded

Agenda approval*
Motion: Jim Sanders moved to approve the June 25, 2002 meeting agenda. Brad Moore seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Input/Communication to the MFRC
None.

Executive Director Report
- Dave Zumeta handed out the Riparian Monitoring report (Harvest of Riparian Forests in Minnesota: A Report to the Legislature). Any comments are due to Mike Phillips by July 2.

---

* Action Item

- Called attention to the White Pine document (Progress in Addressing the 2001 MFRC White Pine Management Recommendations*)* that was mailed in the packet.
- The ad hoc LCMR Proposal Review Committee met (Jan Green, Dave Parent, Wayne Brandt, Bob Stine) to review forest-related LCMR proposals. At the suggestion of LCMR staff, Chair Merriam sent a letter to Dennis Ozment, LCMR Chair, about two proposals of particular relevance to the MFRC's mission. A copy of the letter was provided during this meeting.
- The annual report for the Public Concerns Registration Process is delayed because the contractor recently underwent surgery. The report is expected by late July. The vendor's contract will be renewed for the next fiscal year.
- Greg Damlo and Matt Norton have been appointed to DNR's Motorized Trail Task Force. Twelve meetings will be held over the next six months.
- With the departure of Steven Daley Laursen, Bob Stine has applied for the vacancy in the Research and Higher Education position. The Governor's office has not yet notified MFRC of the status of this possible appointment.

MFRC Committee Reports

Personnel & Finance

The committee met on May 25th to review MFRC's proposed FY 2003 budget. The $700,000 allocation will be barely sufficient this fiscal year. There is clearly a need for a higher than $700,000 allocation in future years. The committee is awaiting more information from the Department of Finance on the '04-'05 biennial budget planning process before it prepares a set of funding scenarios. MFRC will need to submit budgets to Department of Finance in August. The next Council meeting, however, is not until September. *Wayne Brandt moved that the Personnel & Finance Committee be authorized to submit a budget request for the next biennium to the DNR and Department of Finance at a funding level that the committee feels is appropriate, but no lower than $700,000. Ron Nargang seconded. The committee will put together three levels of funding and corresponding SFRA implementation accomplishments for each level of funding. Motion passed.*

Guideline Implementation Monitoring

The committee met on April 3. Dave Parent (committee chair) handed out two documents. The first was a committee meeting writeup that describes the status of the guideline implementation monitoring. The second was a letter from Mike Carroll, Director – MN DNR, Division of Forestry, requesting a grant from the US Forest Service for a Wetland Crossings Cooperative Project. In addition, the letter identified $300,000 to purchase up to seven bridges to be rented for use as temporary stream crossings.

Landscape Planning and Coordination

Ron Nargang (committee chair) reported that the committee met on June 6. The meeting was summarized in the Landscape Program Update document contained in the materials sent prior to this meeting. Called attention to the work on linking site-level and landscape

level, specifically the addition of language in the Guideline book. The first run of economic results for the North Central region has been received.

Forest Resources Information Management Committee
Norm Moody (committee chair) reported that the committee met on May 15. The committee is planning to develop a questionnaire for collecting harvest data by acre from public landowners, based in part on a similar MFI survey recently sent to counties. Also, Norm raised a question about the sampling procedure for implementation monitoring. Dave Parent responded that when BMP monitoring was done, self-selection was the methodology, which resulted in various concerns. Therefore, a random process was created. Dave Parent suggested that the monitoring committee take up the question of sampling procedure for implementation monitoring with advice from Dr. Alan Ek.

Written Communication to the MFRC

1) May 14, 2002 letter from Jack Rajala, Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership Chair – Dave Zumeta mentioned that some of Jack's questions seemed to stem from limited understanding of the guideline revision process, including the requirement to consider public comments. To promote communication, Dave is meeting regularly with Jan Hacker, Partnership Executive Director. Bob Stine noted that there is overlap in representatives between the MFRC and the Partnership, and said that communication could be improved via these dual representation roles.
2) May 23, 2002 letter from Garrett Ous, Minnesota Association of County Land Commissioners Chair – Dave Zumeta briefly reviewed this letter and his response.

Spatial Analysis Program Update
Jim Manolis gave an overview of the Spatial Analysis and Modeling project. The project's purpose is to improve understanding of past, present and possible future forest spatial patterns, and determine the value and limitations of spatial data and analysis. Following the presentation, Dave Parent commented that he is concerned about projecting future scenarios based on past spatial patterns, and wonders if the work incorporates the impacts of climate change and other human impacts. Jim replied that North Central Research Station of the Forest Service is doing some research on these issues. Brad Moore added that climate change modeling is very complex, and difficult to layer on top of this already complex analysis.

Forest Inventory and Analysis Project Presentation
Alan Ek, Chair, Department of Forest Resources, University of Minnesota, presented new Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data available through the Minnesota Forest Resources Information Cooperative. A website was created using inventory data recently released by the Forest Service: www.cnr.umn.edu/FR/research/centcoop/mfric/home.htm

Mike Prouty presented the idea of creating an FIA overview publication targeted to average Minnesota citizens. This publication could be similar to the "Forests of Indiana: A 1998 Overview." There was discussion of the completeness and accuracy of current FIA data, and whether the proposed publication should be deferred. The project will go

forward using staff from the MFRC, Forest Service and University of Minnesota. Presentation of FIA data will include appropriate caveats regarding data quality.

Approval of Proposed FY 2003 Budget*

Gene Merriam provided an overview of the proposed FY 2003 MFRC budget that had been approved by the Personnel and Finance Committee. *Ron Nargang moved to approve MFRC's proposed FY 2003 budget, Norm Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Approval of Recommendation to DNR Commissioner that Implementation Monitoring be Deferred for 2003*

Dave Parent provided rationale for the recommendation to defer collection of guideline implementation monitoring data in 2003 due to budget and staff limitations. The recommendation would provide time to improve the overall implementation monitoring process, including making revisions to the database program. *Dave Parent moved to approve the recommendation, Norm Moody seconded.* Discussion ensued. Matt Norton contended that, because of the recent Minnesota Supreme Court case highlighting the importance of guideline monitoring, this recommendation would send a signal that guideline implementation monitoring is not important. Matt suggested that the MFRC postpone the vote on this until a solid proposal for additional funds could be thoroughly reviewed and researched, including prospects for seeking additional funds from the Legislature. Norm Moody suggested that MFRC should step back and comprehensively review the guideline monitoring process. *Wayne Brandt moved to add a seventh bullet to the proposed recommendation: "Work towards making modifications in the monitoring program that meet the needs of forest certification programs." Brad Moore seconded. Ron Nargang offered a friendly amendment: "Explore.." instead of "Work towards.."* Brad Moore pointed out that the possibility of additional funding from the Legislature is low. It was clarified that if this recommendation were implemented, the uncollected implementation data would be the third or fourth year after the guidelines were published, a year with more sites harvested using the guidelines. Wayne Brandt also pointed out that the recommendation does not defer monitoring, it only defers site-level data collection. Several members pointed out that the governing Minnesota statute for guideline implementation monitoring does not specify *annual* monitoring, so this recommendation is essentially unnecessary. Matt suggested that the Council should develop a game plan to get resources to conduct monitoring in 2003. Norm suggested deferring the motion until the next Council meeting in September, and using the time to complete some strategic work planning around guideline implementation monitoring. *Jim Sanders moved to table this motion until the next meeting. Ron Nargang seconded.* It was stated that the first step of implementation monitoring (identification of the aerial photography sites) is usually completed in September and that a delay until September could compromise the ability to efficiently identify potential sites for monitoring. *The motion to defer discussion of this recommendation until the September Council meeting passed unanimously.*

Approval of "Doable" Guideline Issues for Incorporation into Revised Guidebook*

Norm Moody moved, Dave Parent seconded adoption of the proposed motion entitled "Proposed Motion Regarding "Doable" Issue not on Focused Review List" that had been mailed prior to the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Review, Discussion and Disposition of "Doable" Guidelines on Focused Review List
Mike Phillips began by explaining that "focused review" means those "doable" issues that one or more MFRC members wanted to discuss at this meeting in addition to those "doables" that Mike felt could benefit from Council discussion. Using the document (Focused "Doables" Current as of 5/24/02) sent prior to this meeting that lists these "doable" guidelines and recommended changes as proposed by the Guideline Review Technical Committee (GRTC), specific "doable" guideline issues were discussed.

Discussion of Specific "Doable" Issues:

"Doable" Issues #2, 3, 28, 44: Rich Holm pointed out that the revised definition of "ruts" and "rutting" seemed insufficient. Discussion ensued. *Ron Nargang proposed a motion to reinstate the original language in the guidelines for "ruts" and "rutting" except for the last two new sentences, which will be the language as proposed. Also, the original language will be modified to include the following for ruts and rutting: "Depressions made by the tires or tracks of such vehicles…" Norm seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #25: Wayne Brandt raised a question of why add the 5% patch to small perennial streams less than 3' wide? Mike Phillips clarified that the original thinking was to separate riparian management zones from leave trees, and to not discriminate against small streams. *The Council agreed to the GRTC recommendation as proposed and also to applying the same recommendation to "Doable" Issue #26.*

"Doable" Issue #30: Wayne Brandt commented that by making the proposed changes, it takes away foresters' on-site professional judgment based on slope to determine the proper width of a filter strip. Mike Phillips and the Guideline Review Technical Committee (GRTC) feel that the proposed quantitative Table is clear and is not a problem. *Motion to add "Doable" Issue #30 to the Focused Review List, seconded by Bob Oswold. Motion failed. The language proposed by the GRTC stands.*

"Doable" Issue # 38: Wayne Brandt suggested deleting this issue. *Ron proposed a motion to delete the proposed new bullet item, but to add slash mats as an option in the previous bullet. Rich Holm seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #43: Wayne Brandt asked about how this applies to non-open water wetlands. Does the filter strip prevent the timber sale itself? Wetland inclusion is the intent, but language is potentially creating a new form of filter strip. *Ron Nargang proposed a motion to change the language to "Apply filter strip guidelines to harvest practices adjacent to non-open water wetlands." Jim Sanders seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #45: Wayne Brandt proposed deleting the word "additional" from the proposed new bullet item. Mike Phillips agreed with the suggested language change *Wayne Brandt moved, Norm Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #46: *Dave Parent proposed a motion to change the language in the first line under Communication Information from "Landowner(s) should document their management decisions" to "Landowners and/or resources managers should document their management decisions." Jim Sanders seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #49: *Wayne Brandt proposed a motion to defer action on this issue until the September Council meeting in order to get input from landowners and his members in southeastern Minnesota to increase their comfort level regarding the guideline language on dry washes. Ron Nargang seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

"Doable" Issue #64: *Rich Holm suggested deleting the proposed new language (therefore reverting to the original language) on the first paragraph on page 29 because he feels a 6" culvert is sufficient if installed correctly*. Mike Phillips clarified that 12" is the typical standard since it is less likely to get clogged, and if it does, a 12" culvert is easier to clean out. *Wayne Brandt moved to take out the GRTC's proposed new language recommending 12" culverts. Rich Holm seconded.* Mike then also stated that the 12" standard is already identified in the existing guideline recommendations on Page 18 of the Forest Roads section and that proposed language just transfers an existing recommendation to another appropriate location in the guidebook. *Motion did not pass (8 to 6).*

"Doable" Issue #155: *Wayne Brandt moved to restore the original language, which deletes the issue from the list. Wayne Hammer seconded. Motion did not pass (6 to 8).*

Ron Nargang moved to approve all "doable" issues on the Focused Review List as amended by the Council. Wayne Hammer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Review, Discussion and Disposition of "Minefield" Issues

Ron Nargang proposed the Motion as mailed in the packet (Motion Regarding "Minefield" Issues with Landscape Connections), with an amendment to add "Doable" Issue #38. Norm Moody seconded. Wayne Brandt moved to incorporate a language change to the first sentence of the third paragraph to "developing and providing landscape-site connection information to NIPF landowners for consideration in their management plans." Norm seconded. Motion to amend the language passed unanimously. Motion regarding "Minefield" issues with landscape connections as amended passed unanimously.

Norm Moody moved to accept the proposed motion included in the mailing entitled Proposed Motion Regarding Other "Minefield" Issues. Greg Damlo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Future MFRC Agenda Items

The next MFRC meeting will be September 24th, possibly in Cloquet. The meeting following that is November 19th. Discussion of potential future MFRC agenda items included:

- Staff to share a plan and timeline for next steps in Guideline revision process
- Provide an update on FY 2003 Budget plan
- Personnel and Finance Committee will report on Fiscal Year '04-'05 budget strategy
- Further discuss "Doable" Guideline Issue #49
- Better understanding of guideline implementation monitoring procedures, as discussed in this meeting.
- Further discuss and decide on the proposal to defer guideline monitoring in 2003
- Quarterly update regarding the Bear River Demonstration Forest
- Old Growth status update from Keith Wendt (DNR).
- Discussion of how to address deferral of "minefield" issues related to riparian areas as moved in April meeting by Betsy Daub.

Gene Merriam moved to conclude the meeting, seconded by Rich Holm, passed unanimously.