

*Minnesota Forest Resources Council*  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Cloquet Forestry Center**  
**September 28, 2004**

**Council Members Present:** Al Sullivan (Chair), Wayne Brandt, Brad Moore (alternate for Mike Carroll), Jan Green (alternate for Paige Winebarger), Tom Duffus (alternate for Shaun Hamilton), Bob Oswald, Dave Parent, Duane Kick – Superior National Forest (alternate for Jim Sanders), Bob Stine, Dave Sterr, Bruce Cox, John Stauber, Shawn Perich

**Absent:** Dick Walsh, Kathleen Preece, Butch Eggen (alternate), Barb Spears (alternate)

**Guests** Steve Betzler – Minnesota Power, Don Janes – landowner/tree farmer, John Bathke - MFA, Bruce Zumbahlen - MFA, Paul Pingrey – Wisconsin DNR-Division of Forestry, Bernadine Joselyn – Blandin Foundation, Lisa Schulte – University of Iowa, Tom Baumann – Minnesota DNR

**Staff:** Dave Zumeta, Dave Miller, Mike Phillips, Jenna Fletcher, Lindberg Ekola, Clarence Turner

**Chair's Remarks**

Al Sullivan obtained agreement on the following dates in 2005 for Council meetings: January 19<sup>th</sup>, March 16<sup>th</sup>, May 18<sup>th</sup>, July 20-21, Sept 21 and Nov. 30.

**Public Input/Communication to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council**

None

**Approval of July 27, 2004 Meeting Minutes\***

Bob Stine moved to approve the meeting minutes for July 27<sup>th</sup>. Dave Sterr seconded. The motion carried.

**Approval of September 28, 2004 Meeting Agenda\***

Bob Stine moved to approve the meeting agenda, Wayne Brandt seconded. The motion carried.

**Executive Director Report**

Dave Zumeta stated that John Berns, the Appointments Coordinator in the Governor's office, is meeting with the Governor next week to finalize MFRC's two remaining appointments. Dave also said that performance reviews for all the Council staff for the FY04 are now complete, and complimented MFRC staff for their work in FY04.

**MFRC Committee Reports**

*Personnel and Finance*

Al Sullivan (Chair) reported that the Personnel and Finance Committee met on Sept 21<sup>st</sup>. The committee approved the proposed FY05 budget, and discussed whether to allocate the \$95,242 that carried over from FY04. The committee agreed to allocate the following portions: \$50,750 for Guideline printing and \$26,702 for policy and research, of which \$15,000 will be for a GEIS Report Card Study (see next paragraph) and \$11,000 for an ongoing guideline effectiveness monitoring study. The remaining \$17,790 will be allocated to the budget category from which it was carried over. The committee also approved MFRC's FY05 workplan. Additionally, the committee requested that Dave Zumeta create a document listing the pros and cons of conducting a Metro Landscape Region Plan. That proposal should then presented to the Landscape Committee on November 3rd, which will make a recommendation to the full MFRC at a later meeting. Finally, Dave Zumeta's performance review will be conducted on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Brad Moore then described the funding needed for a GEIS Report Card Study. While this project was recommended for funding from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR), that funding would not begin until July 2005, and a more immediate need has surfaced. Due to Blandin Paper's proposed plant expansion and the fact they have chosen to initiate a voluntary EIS, the Environmental Quality Board will need to decide whether the GEIS is deemed still adequate since is now 10 years old and conditions have changed. Therefore, Brad is seeking funds for two pieces of the LCMR project from several partners.

#### *Guideline Implementation Monitoring*

Dave Parent (Chair) reported that this committee recently released the three-year baseline monitoring report. Dave also reported that 2004 monitoring is underway, and planning for the 2005 monitoring season has already begun. Copies of the baseline monitoring report were provided.

#### *Ad Hoc Guideline Review/Revision*

Dave Parent (Chair) reported that this committee met to review and approve the proposed guideline revisions that have been submitted for full Council approval at this meeting.

#### *Landscape Planning/Coordination*

Bob Stine (Chair) reported that this committee has not met, but a meeting will be held in October or early November. He described a successful education session held on Sept 16 that increased awareness and promoted implementation of the Northeastern Region Landscape Plan. He pointed out that the East Central Region will be the next regional landscape plan to be approved by the Council. Finally, Bob shared that exploratory discussions are underway to determine the benefits of initiating the creation of a Metro Region Landscape plan.

#### *Forest Resources Information Management*

Jenna Fletcher (staff liaison to the committee) reported that this committee has not met since the last MFRC meeting, but recently released the report entitled "Minnesota's Publicly-Owned Timberland: Request for Information of Areas of Timberland Sold in 2001." In addition, work is underway on similar reports using 2002 and 2003 data. Wayne Brandt noted that Itasca County data is missing from the 2001 report, and asked that the Information Management Committee ensure that Itasca County's data is obtained for the 2002 and 2003 reports.

#### **Written Communications to the MFRC**

None

#### **Committee of the Whole: MFRC Members' Perspectives on the Strategic Directions Workshop and Next Steps**

Wayne Brandt asked if we can see how often Forest Information on our FRC website is being accessed. Jan Green suggested that other states do a State of the Forest report. Bob Stine asked if it makes sense to accelerate the Research Advisory Committee reconstitution before the Legislature convenes. Will start the dialogue earlier than spring 2005.

Members reviewed a list of Action Items Resulting from July 2004 Strategic Directions Session. The discussion primarily focused on items 3: "Include time for policy discussions on every meeting agenda" and 4: "Develop and implement strategy for increasing MFRC's contributions to forest policy decisions." A list of policy topics to tackle was created: Roadless Area advice, forest health issues, globalization of forest products industry and impacts on Minnesota businesses and forests (especially secondary), Governor's Water Quality Initiative. Tom Duffus added forestland loss, including parcelization, to the list. Jan Green added the idea of MFRC examining forest issues related to a proposed Laurentian Biomass project on the Iron Range that would use 500,000 tons of waste wood each year. Wayne Brandt agreed this is an appropriate issue, since our Forest Management Guidelines include best practices related to soil, nutrients and slash retention that might be affected by waste

wood collection. Also, if slash volumes were not sufficient, the biomass demand might extend to roundwood. Brad Moore added that the MFRC needs to be more productive in the policy arena through a proactive, collaborative approach, which could be done by identifying common concerns of counties, businesses, and environmental non-profit groups, and use these to create a “same page” approach and a cohesive strategy. This approach will help effectively “compete” against health, education and human services funding needs that together are projected to completely subsume the state budget.

Shawn Perich commented that the Council needs to integrate forestland conversion with shoreland conversion, and said that he would rather see a shoreline legacy program than a forest legacy program. Dave Zumeta added that forest conversion is happening most rapidly in riparian areas. Wayne Brandt suggested adding two issues: increasing wood fiber importation into Minnesota and issues related to secondary forest products businesses.

After creating this list, the members discussed how to prioritize and choose among the possibilities. Further discussion is needed to detail the process of deciding which issues warrant MFRC’s time and attention. Some issues may be simply monitored with periodic updates, and other issues will require us to work with the Legislature. Council members suggested that a “game plan” be developed for each policy issue.

### **Approval of Final Changes to Forest Management Guidelines Based on Peer and Public Review Comments\***

Dave Parent made a motion to approve the final proposed guideline revisions as recommended by the Guideline Revision Technical Committee and Ad-hoc Committees, as contained in Document #3 – Individual Guideline Page Revisions Agreed to by Ad-Hoc Committee on guideline revision. In addition, a proposed amendment to the whole packet was presented for page 7 of the General Guidelines section. Matt Norton drafted an additional bullet point under a list of management activity considerations: “*How the intensity and extent of management on the surrounding watershed may affect the health of streams.*” Bob Stine commented that the proposed bullet point may work for larger landowners, but is less realistic for smaller landowners. Wayne Brandt said that this bullet point does not get down to the allocation of harvests within the watershed. It was noted that watershed is not defined in the glossary, so Mike Phillips agreed to add a definition for watershed. Dave Parent suggested that we not add the bullet, but have the Riparian Science Technical Committee further define the watershed considerations and how to apply them and be clearer on which waterbodies. Shawn Perich moved, and Bruce Cox seconded the proposed amendment to add a bullet (with the word within) to page seven of General Guidelines. Of the nine members present, seven voted in favor, 2 voted against the amendment, so the motion failed.

The vote on the original proposed resolution to approve the final changes to the Forest Management Guidelines passed unanimously.

### **Scientific Basis for Presettlement Vegetation Analysis, and Trends in Aspen Distribution in Minnesota**

Lisa Schulte, Iowa State University discussed natural variability as a concept, then applied the concept and showed regional data for the northern Lake States. Natural variability is ecologically grounded, yet recognizes the dynamic nature of ecosystems. Looking specifically in the Northern Lake States Forests region, aspen/birch dominance has significantly increased since presettlement. She concluded that the Lake States forests are shifting to a new, historically unprecedented state.

### **Vital Forests/Vital Communities Initiative Strategic Actions**

Bernadine Joselyn provided an update on the Blandin Foundation’s activities that support the Vital Forests/Vital Communities Initiative. To date in 2004, grants have been awarded, and several conferences have been held (see [http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/public\\_vital.cfm](http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/public_vital.cfm) for more info.) Bernadine reported that work is underway to create evaluation metrics that measure the effectiveness of activities in addressing the overall goals of the program. Bernadine highlighted the upcoming “Building the Capacity of Minnesota’s Wood Products

Industry” to be held on October 14-15. Lastly, she said that Blandin Foundation is interested in forestland protection to prevent parcelization and fragmentation as major forest products mills divest of their land.

### **Forest Certification Opportunities & Challenges: Perspectives from Wisconsin**

Paul Pingrey – Wisconsin DNR gave an overview of third party forest certification, then spoke about the progress being made in Wisconsin to complete third party forest certification. As of May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Wisconsin obtained dual FSC and SFI certification of 506,000 acres of state forestland. For county-owned forestland, the Wisconsin DNR is acting as a group certification manager, and counties can pursue certification through that approach. Finally, Paul described the state’s approach to certifying non-industrial private lands. Wisconsin’s current property tax program, Managed Forest Law (MFL), has 30,000 enrollees who could be certified under a group certification program. Non-MFL landowners would be able to certify individually as well. Paul concluded with the benefits of forest certification and some insights from Wisconsin’s work, and concluded that there is great public benefit to be gained from certification due to improved management, yet the audit process is reasonable for the managers.

Bob Oswald asked if Wisconsin consumers are demanding certified wood, and Paul responded that business-to-business is the real source of demand, arguing that consumers may never be a key demand driver. However, Paul cited “green building” as a trend that could significantly drive demand for third party certified wood.

Paul also handed out and discussed Wisconsin’s recently completed Statewide Forest Plan. In November, the plan will be followed up by a Governor’s Conference to create legislative and agency action items

### **Public Communications to the MFRC**

None.

### **MFRC Member Comments**

Wayne Brandt reported the Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee was recognized by the American Forest and Paper Association for its work in training, outreach, and recruitment.

Shawn Perich moved to adjourn, Bob Stine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.