

*Minnesota Forest Resources Council*  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Audubon Center of the North Woods, Sandstone, MN**  
**November 30, 2004**

**Council Members Present:** Al Sullivan (Chair), Wayne Brandt, Mike Carroll, Bruce Cox, Jan Green, Shaun Hamilton, Kathy Mantueffel, Bob Oswald, Dave Parent, Shawn Perich, Kathleen Preece, Jim Sanders, John Stauber, Bob Stine, Dave Sterr, Dick Walsh, Paige Winebarger

**Absent:** none

**Guests** Don Janes – landowner/tree farmer, Al Mitton, John Bathke – MFA, Susan Schmidt – The Trust for Public Land, Tom Murn – Potlatch Corporation, Mike Houser – Potlatch Corporation

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

**Chair's Remarks**

Al Sullivan welcomed Kathy Manteuffel to the MFRC, and welcomed Jan Green again to the MFRC. Al designated Jan Green as the Chair of the Information Management Committee, and added Kathleen Preece and John Stauber to the committee. Al described a revised charter for the Information Management Committee that focuses the committee's work on helping MFRC frame forest policy issues by compiling, analyzing and disseminating information relevant to policy questions posed by the MFRC.

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

None

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

Dave Parent moved to approve the September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Mike Carroll seconded. The motion carried.

**Approval of November 30, 2004 Meeting Agenda\***

Jim Sanders moved to approve the meeting agenda, Paige Winebarger seconded. The motion carried.

**Executive Director Report**

Dave Zumeta thanked Butch Eggen for his months of interim service in the Resort and Tourism Industry position on the MFRC. Butch expressed his willingness and interest in talking to Council members about forest-related topics.

Dave also reported that on October 26 he and Dave Sterr attended a meeting of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC). Based on a request from MIAC Executive Director Joe Day, Dave and Dave presented an overview of the work of the MFRC and described opportunities for further cooperation.

Dave Zumeta announced that Dave Sterr is retiring from his position at the Minnesota Bureau of Indian Affairs on December 31, 2004. However, Dave Sterr will continue to serve on the MFRC.

Finally, Dave reported that he and Al Sullivan will be meeting with four key legislators in January to deliver MFRC's 2004 Annual Report. The meetings will be with:

- Rep. Tom Hackbarth, Chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee
- John Marty, Chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee

- Rep. Ozment, Chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee
- Senator Dallas Sams, Chair of the Senate Environment, Agriculture, and Economic Development Budget Division

### **MFRC Committee Reports**

#### *Personnel and Finance*

Al Sullivan (Chair) reported that the Personnel and Finance Committee did not meet since the last Council meeting, and had nothing to report.

#### *Site Level*

Dave Parent (Chair) handed out a written summary of the activities completed in the site-level program. He reported that the 3-year baseline monitoring report was printed and distributed. In addition, the 2004 guideline monitoring field season is complete.

#### *Landscape Planning/Coordination*

Bob Stine (Chair) handed out a summary of the Landscape Planning Committee's meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. In addition, he distributed a written update of Landscape Program activities.

#### *Forest Resources Information Management*

Jan Green (Chair) reported that this committee has not met since the last MFRC meeting. However, the committee will be meeting in January to review a proposed revision to the committee's charter and discuss the Committee's responsibility relative to the newly reconstituted Interagency Information Cooperative under the University of Minnesota - College of Natural Resources.

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

Al Sullivan distributed copies of a letter received from Al Mitton that calls for a perpetual inventory system that would help ensure a consistent supply of fiber to the wood products companies. Al Mitton added that he has been talking to Mike Carroll, and offered that any MFRC members who are interested may join Al and Mike's discussions.

### **Protecting Forestland via Conservation Easements: Forest Legacy, the Role of Partner Nonprofits and the Prospective Role of the MFRC**

Mike Carroll and Susan Schmidt jointly presented information regarding Minnesota's implementation of the Forest Legacy Program. Mike began with an overview of the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) He described the DNR Division of Forestry's role as the administrator for the state. Since 2000, the program in Minnesota has enrolled 18 tracts totaling 1267 acres at a total value of over \$3.7 million. For the next two years, the Brainerd Lakes area will be the focus. He ended by highlighting the importance of the 25% non-Federal funding match.

Susan Schmidt then presented an overview of The Trust for Public Land's role in the Forest Legacy Program. Nationally \$183 million in federal Forest Legacy funds have leveraged the protection of 1,000,000 acres of forested lands valued at \$361 million since the program's inception. Susan then turned to specifics of the Brainerd Lakes Area project. Susan concluded with several recommendations to the MFRC. She suggested that MFRC could help build the case for Forest Legacy in Minnesota by developing a white paper on forest fragmentation, and possibly developing a resolution of support. She also suggested that MFRC could help identify new FLP Projects, and support DNR easement program development and management. Finally, she suggested that MFRC could support Federal Forest Legacy funding requests by encouraging efforts to create a state match program.

## **Committee of the Whole: MFRC member discussion about topics they want to address at MFRC meetings in 2005**

Al Sullivan opened this discussion by stating the purpose: to identify the key issues that should be high priority for the MFRC to tackle in 2005. A list of ten possible topic areas was sent in advance as preparation for this discussion. Al then asked Jenna Fletcher to lay out more specific goals for the discussion. Jenna suggested that the MFRC should identify one or two forest policy topics/issues to focus on in calendar year 2005, and one to two additional policy topics/issues that could be monitored. Suggested criteria for identifying the topics for focus and monitoring are:

- Could the MFRC have a direct impact on addressing/resolving the issue?
- Could the MFRC elevate understanding of the issue generally, but without direct impact?
- Would the Governor agree that the issue is a top priority?
- Would key legislative leaders agree that the issue is a top priority?
- Does the MFRC addressing this issue fit within the intent of the SFRA?

Dave Parent began the discussion by suggesting that the MFRC needs an informational agenda item regarding non-industrial private forest (NIPF) ownership trends, as grounding for policy work. This could also include a briefing on industrial landownership trends. Jan Green stated that she believes the MFRC's role is to get accurate information for policy/political decision-making. For example, MFRC could collate all the information regarding forest certification that is occurring in order to provide a statewide picture of what's happening. Bruce Cox responded that MFRC's involvement in forest certification is not the best use of resources since companies, counties, etc. are already looking at it or actually doing it. Al Sullivan commented that providing information about forestland certification is a good MFRC role, but that MFRC should not take an advocacy position. He added that the Information Management Committee would be a good vehicle for compiling relevant information on a policy topic.

John Stauber suggested that the MFRC support a proposal to Governor Pawlenty to create a task force to study the competitiveness of the secondary forest products industry. Paige Winebarger stated that she envisions two types of lists: 1) future agenda items, and 2) broader policy issues in which we can be more influential. Paige then listed her top policy issues: 1) getting more federal funding into Minnesota for the Forest Legacy Program, 2) improving the state's and Governor's understanding, and developing a position on, the Roadless Area issue, 3) halting the substantial budget decreases for DNR each year, and 4) forest health.

Kathleen Preece noted that over the years some of these same issues have been under discussion, including during the Vital Forests/Vital Communities conferences hosted by the Blandin Foundation. She urged us to understand what issues are being addressed by other organizations.

Jim Sanders proposed that the Roadless Area should be put on the back burner, since Minnesota is awaiting Forest Service input. He also noted that the issue only affects 60,000 acres in Minnesota. Instead, Jim proposes the MFRC focus on: 1) forest landscape health (i.e. Asian longhorn beetles, weeds, invasives, etc.); 2) better understanding of forestland ownership trends (not necessarily "loss") in order to protect forestland and water resources; and 3) need to watch the globalization trends and competitiveness impacts.

Bob Oswald noted that there are over 55 new legislators that do not know who we are, so we should get proactive about educating them about the work of the MFRC. Bob Stine pointed out that MFRC cannot ignore the issue of globalization, and noted that the Governor did not come directly to MFRC when appointing the Task Force on the Competitiveness of the Primary Forest Products Industry.

Al Sullivan proposed a process to ensure that MFRC members would agree to a list of topics. He suggested that the Personnel and Finance (P&F) Committee meet to propose a short list of policy focus areas, and then

bring that list back to full MFRC for approval. Bob Stine suggested that other committees should also nominate policy topics to be sent to P&F before it's meeting.

Based on this discussion, Wayne Brandt proposed a motion to proceed as follows:

- 1) MFRC Committees are requested to forward broad policy issues for consideration by P&F.
- 2) P&F will create a list of policy topic areas to be addressed by the MFRC from the following categories:
  - A) educate MFRC members
  - B) disseminate information beyond the MFRC
  - C) address current shorter term issues;
  - D) fulfill MFRC's role to advise policy makers on broad, significant issues
- 3) P&F report back to full MFRC with recommendations on which policy issue areas should be addressed by MFRC. The recommendations will be brought to the MFRC meeting in March 2005.

Dave Parent seconded this motion. The voice vote on this motion passed unanimously.

In addition, it was agreed that staff will further flesh out the ten possible policy topics, with Council member assistance, in order to clearly frame the policy topics. This will include key definitions and clear articulation of the scale of the high priority issues. Mike Carroll asked that a linkage chart be created to show how work by various organizations is related. For example, the Governor's Task Force work has links to Blandin Foundation projects.

#### **Feasibility of Cosponsoring a Metro Region Forest Resources Landscape Plan with the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee, Tree Trust and the Metropolitan Council**

Bob Stine opened the discussion of the feasibility of MFRC's co-sponsorship of a Metro Region landscape plan by reporting that the Landscape Committee has previously discussed this idea, and the goal of today's discussion is to gauge the level of interest in the MFRC. A "scoping meeting" was held on December 13th with potential players (DNR, Tree Trust, Metro Council, county representative, USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry). Dave Parent asked why this type of regional plan has not been done before. Dave Zumeta noted that no single organization has had a statutory charge to do this type of planning, and the MFRC is the closest to having a mandate to do this. Dave Zumeta reported that he is working on clarification of other player's roles and understanding of the level of commitment from Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee, Tree Trust and Metropolitan Council.

Jim Sanders is concerned about our role; our charter is to provide policy advice to the Governor, Legislature, state and counties, but this metro-area landscape plan would result in goals and strategy that would go to metro cities. Several MFRC members expressed concern about the opportunity cost of MFRC's staff time.

Bob Stine closed the discussion by saying that the Landscape Committee will further discuss this idea and develop a recommendation to the full MFRC if the initiative warrants it.

#### **MFRC Role in Relation to GEIS Report Card Study**

Brad Moore highlighted the three areas of results of the Forestry GEIS Implementation Progress and Accuracy Assessment project: 1) Report card on GEIS Implementation Progress, 2) Assessing the Accuracy of GEIS Projections, and 3) Identifying opportunities and priorities for updating the GEIS. The third piece is not yet fully funded. Brad clarified that these three projects will not "update the GEIS," but will identify what areas need to be updated.

Jan Green wanted more information including the workplan for the three parts of the project. Brad Moore promised to make the project workplans available.

Dave Parent suggested that in addition to mill expansion, other projects are creating demand for wood fiber, i.e. Laurentian Energy Project. Therefore, this demand should be included in the third result: Identifying opportunities and priorities for updating the GEIS.

Paige Winebarger asked if forest fragmentation issues would be captured and examined in the “report card.” Brad responded that some of that would be there, but might also be addressed in Result 3.

Jan Green pointed out that a modeling update of the GEIS would be difficult because it was a mega harvest schedule model.

Dave Zumeta asked Brad what the role of the MFRC is given the fast timeframe (complete result 1 & 2 by spring). Brad suggested that the consultants working on Result #3 should come to the full Council to obtain MFRC’s advice and input.

Brad Moore also provided an update on the implementation activities following the Governor’s Task Force recommendations.

**Public Communications to the MFRC**

None.

**MFRC Member Comments**

None.

**Agenda for January 19, 2005**

Dave Zumeta said that there are several agenda items already identified for January 19<sup>th</sup>. First, forestland ownership trends will be on the agenda as a Committee as a Whole discussion. Also, an update on GEIS Report Card Study. It is anticipated that there will be an action item to decide whether to lead the creation of a Metro Region landscape plan. Dave also noted that a television series entitled “Minnesota: A History of the Land” will air on public television in early February, but MFRC members will get a sneak preview of one of the shows’ segments related to forests.

Jim Sanders moved to adjourn the meeting, Mike Carroll seconded. The motion passed unanimously.