

Meeting Summary

Informational and Organizational Meeting

East Central Landscape

East Central Energy Building
Braham, Minnesota
March 28, 2004

Meeting Participants:

Bob Pulford	Wayne Damerow	Bill Saumer
Shelly Larson	John Bathke	Steve Nelson
LeRoy Herrich	Dick Knoll	Jeanne Holler
Jan Manley	Tim Anderson	Robert Field
Bill Clapp	Tim Edgeton	Sean Petty
Robert Nelson	Don Janes	Paul Petty
Mark Haglin	Joan Galli	Matt Norton
Brad Maitland	Mark Johnson	Chuck Forss

Staff:

Dave Zumeta	Chad Skally
Dave Miller	Lindberg Ekola

Opening Remarks:

Dave Zumeta, Executive Director of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC), provided an overview of the MFRC and the landscape program as a part of his opening remarks. Dave thanked the participants for attending the meeting and noted the range of interests and backgrounds that were represented. He identified resources available to help prepare the plan for the East Central landscape, which would be further described by Dave, Chad and Lindberg.

Overview of the MFRC:

Dave Miller, Landscape Program Coordinator, provided an overview of the landscape program, the MFRC and the legislative history in the Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA). He briefly summarized the Generic Environmental Impact Statement for forestry resources prepared in the early 1990s and its relationship to the SFRA.

He noted that the landscape program is a voluntary program that addresses forest resource planning and management on a regional scale. The landscape approach was a new way to bring stakeholder groups together to address forestry management issues in a more collaborative way. He described the landscape planning process and the role of the regional committees in guiding the development of the regional planning efforts. Dave introduced the plans prepared in the other landscape regions including the Northeast, North Central, Southeast, West Central and Northern landscapes.

GIS Resources:

Chad Skally, GIS Specialist, provided an overview of the data and mapping resources available for the East Central landscape planning process. Chad presented examples from the other landscapes as possible approaches for the East Central. He also presented three initial maps illustrating resource features in the region and discussed the uses of the maps with meeting participants.

Planning Process and Participation Options:

Lindberg Ekola, East Central Landscape Planner, reviewed in more detail the steps proposed for the planning process. He also discussed ways that interested persons could participate in the planning process (provide input on the direction for the planning process, review draft documents, serve on the committee, etc.) as well as the implantation process (serve on the overall coordination committee or an implementation team, advocate sustainable forestry, etc.).

The meeting participants asked a number of questions and provided a variety of comments. Points discussed included:

- Timeframe to prepare landscape level plans – it has both shortened and the process has improved.
- Consideration of previous local planning efforts in the region – staff will be collecting and summarizing documents prepared by local entities in the region as a part of this process.
- Translating and connecting local plans with this regional process – a part of the primary role for the East Central committee will be to help build the interconnections and translations to the local level.
- Impacts of the prairie landscapes – the West Central Landscape addressed the prairie ecosystem and can provide the East Central with some approaches to consider.
- Regulatory aspects – the process is voluntary. Implementation including regulatory provisions are largely local matters.
- Deer populations – this topic should be considered in the process.
- Wildlife corridors project – this is a project currently underway that may help this process. The contact person is Peggy Booth.
- Fragmentation and land development – the region is experiencing rapid growth and this will need to be considered.

Next Steps:

Meeting participants were asked to volunteer to serve on the East Central Landscape Committee. A total of 16 people volunteered to serve on the committee. Agenda packets for the next meeting will be sent out to all persons on the initial mailing list (approximately 85 people). Staff will continue to follow up with other persons interested in serving on the committee over the next month.

Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, April 28, 2004, starting at 9:30 a.m. If the East Central Energy building is not available, staff will select the location.